Mexico Instals a President *by Lyle C. Wilson*

The Nation

Vol. CXXX, No. 3372 Founded 1865 Wednesday, February 19, 1930

Divorce and After

II. Separation Without Divorce

Boulder Dam Power

by Ruth Finney

Harvard "Explains"

by Gardner Jackson

Fifteen Cents a Copy Five Dollars a Year

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There Is Only One Answer

A Free Press uses the weapons of Truth against Falsehood and Intolerance

IN the Christian Scientists' conspiracy to boycott a book on Mrs. Eddy and in the publication of a new edition of the Catholic *Index Expurgatorius*, we have sharp and timely reminders that the ugly impulse of intolerance is not dead but very much alive. There are individuals and organizations that are active to smother the truth, to sidetrack the truth, to create new (or rebuild the old) barriers of hate and fear which stand in the way of general recognition of the truth. Strong influences strike at the freedom of the press.

Legal freedom of the press does not necessarily mean actual, effective, complete freedom of the press. The Christian Scientists, for example, cannot legally prevent the circulation of the biography of Mrs. Eddy; but they can and do try to "smother" this book by threats, misrepresentation, and prejudiced efforts. The Roman Catholic Church cannot legally suppress the books which it "damns" in its *Index Expurgatorius;* but it can and does maintain a wall of intolerance, which is as effective as the full force of the State would be with countless dupes of Catholic bigotry. There is more than one way to kill a book; to stifle or smother a book; to prevent a book from being read; to get a book somehow out of the way so that it will not interfere with the bigots who thrive upon error.

The legal right of free speech simply means, after all, that truth must be eternally vigilant and persistent in combating error. Free speech, in the legal sense, means that we have the right to use the weapons of enlightenment. It is our responsibility to use these weapons. And we have to fight agencies of falsehood and intolerance that are bold, treacherous, and sleeplessly active.

There is only one answer to bigotry! There is only one hope upon which rests the free progress of humanity! There is only one method of fighting back at such campaigns of intolerance as that waged by the Christian Science hierarchy and the Roman Catholic hierarchy! *We must use the free press freely and actively.* We must persist in spreading all the more vigorously the very kind of literature which the agents of intolerance are trying to beat down. We must not merely resist the bigots, but we must attack them in turn, we must overwhelm them with regiments of our best soldiers, quick-moving soldiers that can attack swiftly and certainly at many points.

We give the rallying cry, "Forward march against the bigots!" We have called into the front line an emergency regiment of our most intrepid, sharp-edged, center-thrusting, liberating books. We call this our Free Press Library—or, to continue our real simile of war between truth and error, between toleration and intolerance, our specially chosen book regiment of soldiers-in-print.

These 60 books are mighty agents of enlightenment. They will confound the foes of truth, scattering their lies and pretenses like chaff before the strong, free wind of conquering, clearing thought. They are more than an answer to the challenge of the bigots—they are powerfully the kind of literature that throws the bigots on the defensive and strikes confusion into the ranks of error.

These 60 books in our Free Press Library cover a wide range of debunking, liberating, civilizing truth and reason. These 60 books show with firm and lucid effectiveness the first principles of independent, rational, fearless thought. These 60 books assert, they powerfully establish and enforce, the rights of reason and the intellectual, as well as the humane, rights of man. These 60 books are instantly at the command of lovers of free thought and enlightenment—instantly at command to march forth throughout all the length and breadth of America and combat the agents of bigotry. The Christian Scientists are using their greatest efforts to "smother" a single biography of Mrs. Eddy. The Roman Catholic Church repeats its mediaeval edicts of intolerance against certain books which expose its dogmas. But how small their efforts will look when millions of copies of these 60 books in our Free Press Library are dispatched through the mails North and East and South and West—*a conquering band of book soldiers which the Christian Scientists and the Roman Catholics and all the agencies of bigotry together cannot suppress!* In assertion of the *realities* as well as the *rights* of a free press, we shall rally not one book but 60 books against the bigots! And these 60 books can be multiplied without limit—multiplied to 60,000 or to 600,000 or to 6,000,000 books.

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To BIGOTRY!

is thereby asserting and helping to make more effective the realities of a free press. Order these 60 books and thus declare with spirited independence that for you the truth shall not be suppressed. Order these 60 books and thus serve notice to all Christian Scientists, all Roman Catholics, all bigots everywhere: "I am a supporter of a free press, I am a defender of the truth, I am an encourager of reason against all your threats and conspiracies!" Order these 60 books for yourself. Have your friends order them or order them for your friends. Spread the truth—that is the best way to combat error. Order into action the book-soldiers of a free press—that is the best way to fight intolerance.

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THE NATION, No. 20 Vesey Street, New York City, Cable Address: Nation, New York. British Agent of Subscriptions and Advertising, Miss Gertrude M. Cross, 34, Clifton Gardens, W. 9, London, England.

THE LONDON NAVAL CONFERENCE made marked progress in the week ending February 8, and, as we go to press, is tackling the submarine question in a plenary session. Both our own delegation and the British submitted concrete proposals on successive days, the latter far more to our liking than our own. The MacDonald proposal is for eventual abolition of all battleships, a construction holiday until 1935, with the number of capital ships reduced by 1931 to the number proposed for 1936 by the Washington treaty, and the limitation of their size to 25,000 tons each. Destroyers would be limited to 200,000 tons, aircraft carriers to 100,000 tons with a maximum size of 25,000; the abolition of submarines is urged and failing that their limitation in size and number to make them a purely defensive force. The American proposals would equalize the British and American fleets by 1931 instead of waiting until 1942 and effect the immediate reduction of the battleships to fifteen vessels apiece. Why these fifteen should not be abolished now is beyond our comprehension. The cruiser deadlock between the two countries is to be broken by giving eighteen large cruisers to the United States to fifteen for England and a larger number of small cruisers for the British, each country to have the option exactly to duplicate the cruiser fleet of the other. The Americans are for the abolition of the submarine but weaken their case by conceding that it is unobtainable. Altogether there is far too much splitting of hairs, but at least it now appears certain that the conference will end without the favorite jingo charge since the Washington treaty that the British are ahead of the game.

THE TARIFF DEBATE has dragged along for another week with the usual voting up of some schedules and down of others and with the honors going to Senator La Follette. But his attack upon the American valuation plan, as a basis for levying duties on imports of coal-tar dyes and other chemical products, failed to induce the Senate to amend the bill. Mr. La Follette boldly stated that the American chemical industry was being favored because of contributions made by its representatives to the two political parties in the last campaign. He showed that the Republican National Committee had received $117,000 from the leading men of the chemical industry, while $335,000 went to the Democratic National Committee. The latter amount was contributed by three men, John J. Raskob, $260,000, P. S. Du Pont, $50,000, and the familiar Francis Garvan, $25,000. Fortunately the coalition was able to win six roll-calls, reducing the proposed rates on various chemicals. Cement was continued on the free list by a vote of 40 to 35, with Senator Copeland, of New York, appealing vainly on behalf of the poor cement workers of his State who are, he asserts, suffering grievously from the low-wage competition of our former Belgian allies. The other Senator from New York took the opposite viewpoint. In every vote now party lines are totally abandoned and sectional differences appear. In the main, however, the coalition of insurgent Republicans and Democrats is accomplishing a good deal in whittling down the proposed committee rates.

THE HAITIAN COMMISSION appointed by President Hoover has at least two excellent members: William Allen White of the Emporia *Gazette* and James Kerney of the Trenton *Times*. We confidently believe that they will undertake their important mission with open minds and a determination to find a way for us to withdraw from the island at the earliest possible moment. Of the other appointees, W. Cameron Forbes, the chairman, is of the utterly conservative, Leonard Wood school of imperialism. It is only fair to say that his administration of the Philippines was well above the average, but it was not marked by any zeal to fit the Filipinos for early independence. As for Henry P. Fletcher, his discouraging record as Ambassador to Mexico, where he stood with the interventionists, is clearly on record. The fifth member, Elie Vezina, is an unknown quantity. For the rest, not one of the many persons who have especially studied the situation has been appointed, nor has an American colored man. It is, as a whole, so discouraging a commission that we prefer to dwell at this moment upon President Hoover's recent statement that "the primary question which is to be investigated is when and how we are to withdraw from Haiti." This is the first time an American

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President has recognized that our primary problem is how to get out, not how to stay in. Other portions of his statement had the usual political flavor, especially the formal and undeserved compliments to General Russell and his administration of the island. But at least our Chief Executive has taken the first definite step on the right road.

LIFE IMPRISONMENT after four convictions for shoplifting was the sentence received the other day by Ruth St. Clair, confessed drug addict, in New York City. The first woman to receive a life sentence under the Baumes laws had committed four thefts from department stores over a period of ten years. She had served a year in Auburn for her first offense, the theft of a coat, which seems in itself harsh enough. Now, after three other thefts, Mrs. St. Clair receives a mandatory life sentence after pleading guilty. We have therefore the spectacle of a woman for whom prison did nothing in the way of reform being sentenced to prison for the rest of her life—she is now twenty-nine years old—not to make her over into a better citizen but evidently to protect society against her. In return, the taxpayers of New York will pay her board and lodging and furnish her with clothing of a sort for a possible thirty-five years and perhaps longer. It is encouraging to record that after appeals by Judge Levine, who pronounced sentence, Chief Magistrate McAdoo, and District Attorney Crain, Governor Roosevelt has announced that he will at once begin a study of the case with a view to shortening the sentence if possible. As it stands, the case is certainly one of the most striking examples of the complete brainlessness of our prison system, not to mention its brutality. The latter is also clearly evidenced by the release from Sing Sing, after serving twenty years of a thirty-nine-year sentence, of Frank Singer for the theft in 1909 of $51. Singer came out of jail unable to fasten his own collar or to tie his necktie. A benevolent State had bestowed on him $10, he had $45 of his own, and he had earned, at the rate of 1½ cents a day, $35.98 in prison. Thus endowed and, one trusts, completely "reformed," he reentered a waiting world.

THE RESIGNATION of William A. Prendergast as chairman of the New York Public Service Commission brings into sharp relief the critical situation that exists in public-utility regulation the country over. As the climax of months of criticism, the Community Councils of New York City on January 27 sent Governor Roosevelt a letter demanding the removal of Mr. Prendergast on the ground of corporation bias. His resignation was due to a sharp difference of opinion between him and the Governor. Mr. Prendergast holds that the commission has "quasi-judicial functions"; that its job is to hold the scales even between the utilities and the consuming public. The Governor maintains that its task is to protect the consumer against the utilities. The *World* in a bewildered editorial confesses that it cannot tell which is right. Meanwhile, the telephone company, acting under the decision of a federal court, on its own responsibility puts into effect an intrastate schedule of advanced rates, with 20 per cent of the increase temporarily shaved off by the feeble last-minute order of the commission. Some fifty-nine cities of the State are reported to be preparing to fight the increases. Every one can see today that in New York as elsewhere regulation unhappily does not regulate.

A DECENT RESPECT FOR LAW and public opinion animated the police of New York City on Tuesday, January 28, in their handling of a Communist parade in connection with the funeral of a Communist worker. On the previous Saturday the police had charged a crowd of Communists and others about the City Hall and brutally clubbed and beaten whoever came in their way. On Tuesday they "courteously but firmly" kept the funeral procession in line and guarded the route to the cemetery. Even the open-air speeches denouncing capitalism were not interfered with. For this peaceable outcome of what it was feared might be another riotous performance the police are to be commended. It all goes to show that the police can handle a crowd without resort to clubbing and punching, and that they react handsomely to the right sort of orders from their superiors. Police Commissioner Whalen has emitted some fine remarks about courtesy and self-restraint on the part of the police, but it is time he waked up to a realization that what happened on January 28 should be the rule not the exception.

DISCRETION AND VALOR are the means which Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald has used to disarm the opposition of the House of Lords to the unemployment-insurance bill. The government bill as sent to the Lords contained no time-limit, but the Lords amended the bill by limiting its operation to one year. The Government was thus confronted, as Mr. MacDonald explained at a meeting of the Labor Party, with three possibilities. Either the amendment must be accepted, in which case the Lords would win; or it must be rejected, in which case the bill would automatically fail; or the amendment itself must be amended. The last course was approved by the House of Commons, the principle of a time-limit being accepted but with the limit placed at three years. As the Lords are not thought to care much what the time-limit is so long as there is one, the approval of the bill by the upper house is regarded as assured. Thus has another "crisis" been discreetly averted. If Mr. MacDonald had insisted upon the constitutional claim of the Commons to have its bills accepted by the Lords without change in principle or essential substance, he would probably have had to go to the country on that issue. The important thing, after all, is to get the unemployment scheme into operation as soon as possible.

THE SHOOTING OF PRESIDENT RUBIO of Mexico just after his inauguration will not precipitate another revolution in that country or make it necessary for Washington to get the United States Army and Navy ready for "developments." The assault, fortunately without too serious consequences for President Rubio and the others who were injured, appears to have been one of those acts of political foolishness to which every head of a government is always more or less exposed. Miguel Flores, the young man who did the shooting, is reported to have been a follower of Vasconcelos, the defeated candidate of the Anti-Reelectionist Party in the recent presidential election and the political rival of President Rubio. The story that the attack was part of a plot to exterminate the entire Cabinet, throw the affairs of the country into confusion, and enable the Vasconcelistas to seize the government is, however, to be taken with all reserve pending further investigation. The fact that the retiring President, Portes Gil, is Minister of the Interior in

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the Rubio Cabinet and the ranking Cabinet officer carries an assurance of firm and competent executive direction of affairs until President Rubio is able to assume his duties.

WHILE COMPTROLLER BERRY of New York issues a report giving six reasons why that happy city can never "go broke," New York's sister metropolis on the shores of Lake Michigan continues its celebrated plan of pay-less pay days. On February 2 Chicago argued before the Supreme Court of the United States for seven additional years' diversion of Lake Michigan water after 1938 because it has no money to build sewage-disposal plants. On February 3 Silas Strawn issued a new ultimatum on the terms of financial salvation laid down by his "Citizens' Rescue Committee." On February 4 the city council promised complete cooperation with the Strawn committee and at the same time pledged friendly relations with H. Wallace Caldwell, president of the Board of Education, who was attacking Mr. Strawn and urging the independent marketing of tax-anticipation warrants. On February 5 Mr. Caldwell left for New York to sell such warrants, if possible, in the purlieus of Wall Street. On the same day Chicago reported its seventh murder within a week, with the police hunting vainly for clues. On February 6 the city administration headed by Mayor Thompson was reported to have decided on its own plan of meeting the financial situation and to have determined, if that plan failed, to make war on the "reformers," the Strawn committee, and the bankers, with Mr. Caldwell flooding the homes of the city with propaganda through the school children. Life in these simple country villages of ours does not lack interest!

NELSON T. JOHNSON, our new Minister to China, set an admirable example to other newly appointed diplomats on his recent arrival at Shanghai. He declined to discuss political affairs, saying, "I have arrived with an open mind and will strive to keep my mind open, for nothing gets into or comes from a closed mind." Mr. Johnson, whose instructions are to reside near the seat of the Chinese Government, is a "career man" who has come to his present position by promotion from within the service, after having enjoyed the advantage of a considerable period of residence in China. Knowing the Chinese language and people, appreciating at once the richness and value of the Chinese culture and its fundamental differences from our own, viewing sympathetically the profound movements of social advance now under way in the Orient, and understanding that great historic movements require time and patience for their consummation, he would seem almost ideally fitted for the difficult role of international interpreter at this critical stage of the relations between East and West.

SOME OF BROADWAY'S PRETTIEST actresses stormed the capitol at Albany the other day and persuaded an Assembly committee to report in favor of the Langdon Post amendment to the Wales act, which will prohibit the arrest of actors playing in a show prosecuted under the obscenity act. The deference of the legislators is a tribute not only to the charm of their fair assailants, but to the logic of the demand made. It is outrageous that when a play is alleged to be obscene the players in it should be assumed to be guilty. In any case, the actors are professional persons working under contract. It is not their function, but the function of the courts, to decide whether a given play is obscene. They are only too happy to dissociate themselves from a vicious play, as their trade union, the Actors' Equity Association, has consistently stated. But learned judges themselves are often puzzled to decide what is obscene and what is not, and it is unreasonable to demand that actors shall constitute themselves individual courts of justice, and suffer a night in jail if the police allege that they have guessed wrong. The wholesale arrest of actors, which is one of the more manifest absurdities of the Wales padlocking law, has occurred several times in the past two seasons. The Langdon Post amendment should be only the prelude to the repeal of the Wales law.

A THOUSAND PERSONS in Marion, North Carolina, are dependent on the Federal Council of Churches and the American Friends' Service Committee for food and medical care. These are the strikers and their families out of jobs and dispossessed from company houses after their protest against the twelve-hour day and a weekly wage averaging only $13. The relief agencies want $1,000 a week to care for them and any clothing they can get besides. It is obvious that a dollar a week per person will not maintain these workers in a state far removed from starvation. But such a state must be familiar enough to them, in addition to cold and disease. In case the point is of interest to any person desirous of giving contributions, these strikers are not "foreigners" but American-born citizens, as native as the soil they live on. They are the victims of the advance of industrialization in the South. They have done nothing but object to a standard of living and a working day far below the requirements of health and decency. No demands for help at present seem more logical, more pressing, or more worthy to be answered. Checks may be sent to the Federal Council of Churches, 105 East Twenty-second Street, New York City.

THE PROMOTION MANAGER of *The Nation* on January 27 sent to the *Christian Science Monitor* for insertion in its Eastern Region edition of January 31 an advertisement of our issue of February 5 containing the first article in the series now running, The Christian Science Censor, together with advance proofs of that article. On February 7 he made inquiry by mail concerning the placing of the advertisement and asked for a copy of the issue containing it. On February 10 he received, in an envelope postmarked Boston, February 8, 2:30 p. m., a letter dated January 31 from the advertising manager of the *Monitor*, reading as follows:

> We acknowledge with thanks the advertisement which you sent us, headed "The Christian Science Censor."
>
> Consideration has been given to this advertisement, also to advance proof of one of the series of articles which is to appear in *The Nation*, and we must respectfully decline to accept this advertising.

Naturally, the authorities of the Mother Church prefer not to have the attention of their followers and other readers called to the methods described in these articles, and they can perhaps scarcely be blamed for refusing our advertisement. The third article in the series, dealing with freedom of the press, will appear in our next issue.

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The New Chief Justice

WE consider President Hoover's choice of Charles E. Hughes to be Chief Justice of the United States a bad appointment. We are well aware that nearly every newspaper has praised the selection, even the New York *World*—shades of its great editor, Frank Cobb! —while the Baltimore *Sun* has kept an amusing silence. To the average man it will doubtless seem an admirable choice. Is Mr. Hughes not the recognized leader of the American bar? Was he not a member of the Supreme Court for six years? Is he not also a member of the Permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague? What could be more fitting?

To these questions we reply that we admit without qualification Mr. Hughes's technical fitness. As to his ability there can be no doubt. Though nearly sixty-eight years of age he is in perfect health, alert, and vigorous. If these things alone constituted a great chief justice there would be nothing more to be said. But these are all in all minor qualities, some not even essential. There is the case of Justice Holmes who at eighty-nine years shows no evidence of failing mental power—how happy a gesture it would have been had Mr. Hoover promoted this great American if only for a brief span! It is not age or youth which counts, but the point of view, the flexibility of a mind, its openness to new ideas, new trends, new social developments. What makes Mr. Hughes's appointment so regrettable is that here is a fixed, set, intolerant mentality, closed on various issues, and deadly conservative. During the six years he served in the Supreme Court he ranked as neither a liberal nor a progressive. He was in the main with the majority and he took his positions with a puritanic belief in his own righteousness and the supreme wisdom of his own opinions. A more dangerous type of mind in this hour of the world's development it would be hard to find. Let those who doubt recall some of his acts as Secretary of State—his attitude toward Mexico, toward Russia, his exclusion of the Karolyis and others whose opinions for one reason or another Mr. Hughes disliked, his worship of property rights, and, afterwards, his readiness to take retainers from any great corporation, any master of privilege. We have said before, and we repeat now, that there is something profoundly alarming in this type of mind when it reaches high office deeply inoculated with the poison of a self-righteousness which identifies one's country and its needs with one's own opinions.

It is bad enough when a man of this type is in an office like that of Secretary of State, but there at least he can be checked by public protest, by the opinions of the Congress. As Chief Justice he is in a sense beyond the control of public opinion. He cannot be overruled; his is the last word if the majority is with him. The court is now so constituted that it will defend the status quo with him to the uttermost—unless Congress itself overrules its decisions by new legislation. Then we would remind our readers of the damage which six years on this same court did to Mr. Hughes. He went on the bench the respected and admired Governor of New York, who had been a consistent and determined advocate of the people's rights—not merely the policyholders in insurance companies, but the plain people in whose behalf he created the Public Service Commission to regulate the public utilities, by appealing over the heads of party bosses to the people of the State. He came off the bench—to wage his weak and futile and intellectually pitiful campaign for the Presidency in 1912. Few contrasts could be greater than that between the Hughes of 1906 and the Hughes of 1912.

This man the best choice to head the Supreme Court, this Charles E. Hughes who only recently was fighting before that court the case of the Interborough Rapid Transit Company in order to weaken the force of the public-service regulation he himself as Governor championed? This lawyer who took a brief for the insurance companies in a vain effort to aid them in avoiding payment on their policies to all Russian citizens? This man who was part and parcel of Mr. Harding's rotten administration and to this day has never found the opportunity to characterize the unparalleled record of graft and corruption and criminal carelessness which marked the Cabinet of which both he and Mr. Hoover were unscathed but silent parts? No; there was Harlan Stone to be had right on the Supreme Court—official circles were so certain of Justice Stone's appointment that it is obvious there was a sudden change of mind by Mr. Hoover. But there were other judges here in New York State, to speak of no other, who would have brought fresher and freer minds to the supreme judicial office in the land. These next few years may well be epoch-making. The overwhelming growth of great capitalist organizations, the extraordinary combinations of great companies going on under our eyes—encouraged by the Congress in the case of the railroads—these and other events reveal in part what is ahead. And what is needed at the head of the supreme tribunal is not a closed mind but one aware that the world and the old order change and must change; that to progress at all we must grow away from the narrow, nationalistic, and outworn individualistic kind of life to which Mr. Hughes is so completely and intolerantly devoted. Moreover, the Chief Justice is the administrative head of all the United States courts—courts that are carrying on, through their administration of endless receiverships of every sort of business, a bigger business than the United States Steel Corporation. These same courts are swamped by the vast multitude of prohibition cases. At sixty-eight the span of administrative ability is short, however long one may still be capable of legal opinions. But this, though important, is less important by far than the question of the mental attitude of the judge, and there, as we said last week, Mr. Hughes's appointment seems little less than a public disaster.

That Mr. Taft is a conservative, that he has had little knowledge and understanding of the problems of the underdog, is true. Life for him has been from the beginning smooth, easy, successful. Yet for all his failure to take the progressive side he has shown evidences of pliability and he never has thought himself of the anointed and the infallible. We consider the change in the chief justiceship grave indeed, particularly if it is a portent of what Mr. Hoover's future appointments to the Supreme Court will be.

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Unions with Brains

THE two most interesting trade unions in the United States today are in the garment trades. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers in the men's clothing industry and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in the field of women's wear have consistently applied brains to the solution of the practical problems facing them and have at the same time kept untarnished the social idealism of their Jewish socialist theories. As a result they have managed to give fresh hope to those who believe that labor organization is essential to a modern democratic society.

The older union technique consisted in organizing the workers by hook or crook, and then taking the employer by the throat and compelling him to give up the most that he could be made to yield in the way of wages and hours. That technique worked fairly well until the employers learned the trick of organizing themselves into groups to fight the unions or until industries became organized into great trusts under unified management. Then the old union leadership was bankrupt. It had no tactics to meet the new conditions and no ideas by which to live. Consequently, despite the great growth in numbers that came with the war, American unionism has gone through a long period of intellectual sterility and practical impotence. A powerful organization like the United Mine Workers, failing to adjust itself to the new conditions, has been broken to pieces on the rock of stubborn economic facts; while the building trades, the heart of the American Federation of Labor, though managing by various devices to maintain a high wage scale for their limited membership, have yet lost all significance for the great body of workers whom they can see no way of organizing.

Among the clothing workers we behold a different scene. The International Ladies' Garment Workers have just called a great strike in New York to bring about the organization of the dressmaking industry, having successfully accomplished that result for the cloak and suit industry by the strike of last summer. Faced with the fact that their earlier success in forcing union standards on the big factories by the older methods was simply hastening the process of driving the industry out of those factories into the little sub-contracting shops and sweatshops, they broadened their conception to the actual organization of the whole industry, so that no one should be able to take advantage of sub-standard labor conditions. Further, they succeeded in having impartial machinery set up for the protection of employer and employee alike against unreasonable demands, thus obtaining for themselves a position of power and partnership in the industry.

To those who fear the destructive effect of "radical" ideas, we commend a consideration of the activities of the International Ladies' Garment Workers. Without surrendering their socialist principles these hard-headed unionists, who have consistently remained in good and regular standing with the American Federation of Labor, have come forward with a series of constructive plans for the stabilization and upbuilding of the industry in which they make their living. What "conservative" organization can show an equally good record?

Star Spangled Banner

THE Linthicum Bill, making the Star Spangled Banner officially the American national anthem, has been reported out of House committee and appears well on its way to being enacted into law. The five million Americans who, at the instance of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and other patriotic societies, are alleged to have petitioned Congress to this end did not, of course, realize what they were doing. For the Linthicum Bill would make hatred of a great, friendly nation an official sentiment of the United States.

Opponents of the Linthicum Bill are at a disadvantage because the impression is about that in criticizing the Star Spangled Banner they are somehow committing an unpatriotic act. It is generally believed, and recklessly asserted by the proponents of the bill, that the song is already our national anthem and that Congress is merely being asked to ratify an existent fact. This is not true. President Wilson in 1916 designated the song not as the national anthem but merely as the tune to be played—rather than sung—at certain official ceremonies. There happened to be at the time a departmental demand for such designation, and this song was the one named since it already had quasi-official recognition by the Navy Department—probably because it was the one which the naval bands were most accustomed to play. Not wishing to stir up controversy just then, President Wilson followed such precedent as existed and designated the same tune for the army and other departments.

This hasty official act does not prevent us from saying what is admitted by all objective critics: that the tune is mediocre, awkward, and unsingable by the ordinary voice; that the verses are stilted, obscure, and entirely without poetic merit; and that the origins of the music and words do not befit the dignity of a national anthem—if we must have one. The tune, as disclosed in an official report to the Library of Congress in 1909, was originally the "constitutional song" of the Anacreontic Society, which met at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand, London, and was given to generous libations and to "songs not exactly calculated for the entertainment of the ladies." This "constitutional" doxology urged the members not only to drink heartily, but also to "entwine the myrtle of Venus with Bacchus's vine." Taken at twice the tempo now commonly used, it was a raucous and rollicking air.

The poet of the Star Spangled Banner was a Baltimore lawyer. His verses, written for vaudeville performance, celebrated an episode in the War of 1812. They are in the bombastic style of music-hall ballads of the time and are unintelligible without a gloss. But if they mean anything, they mean hatred of the foreigner and contempt for the British nation; they rejoice that the blood of the "hireling band" has "washed out their vile footsteps' pollution." This was all very well for a momentary jubilation after a threatened invasion. But it is an entirely different matter to make the passion of such a moment the consecrated credo of the United States. At a time when we are seeking, for the sake of the world's peace, an honorable understanding with Great Britain, it is not seemly or sportsmanlike to enshrine official insults at her in third-rate verse.

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It Seems to Heywood Broun

MAXWELL BODENHEIM wants to ask a question. "Do you believe," he inquires, "that personal attacks, false or true, should be included in articles which purport to be reviews of an author's book? Do you believe that a critic should confine himself to an opinion of the literary values and the importance and originality of a book without intruding his emotional reactions toward the author as a man in daily life?"

Fortunately these are not questions which can be answered with a simple "Yes" or "No." There is also need of definition. Although Mr. Bodenheim proceeds to cite his own particular grievance against a reviewer his question is couched in more general terms. The subject is debatable. I believe I am against Mr. Bodenheim. For instance, let us assume that a new war novel comes out. I may happen to have information, personal or otherwise, that the author is a pronounced pacifist and that his book was written with the desire to arouse sentiment against war. I think it is my privilege to note this fact in my review.

It is not necessary that I should confine myself wholly to palpable and printed evidence. After all, the critic's function is to explain and interpret the thing he criticizes. Something of the author himself remains upon the page even after he has completed his job and the book is bound and sold. In explaining the author, one may well make the quality of the book more understandable. I do not see how it is possible to draw a sharp line between the individual and his performance. To be sure, there are certain facts about an author which I would not care to drag into a review even though I might be perfectly sure of my ground. But even here I must set up the rather feeble excuse of a partial devotion to good taste. It would embarrass me to say in reviewing a novel, "The author happens to be a notorious drunkard." Yet an argument can be made for even such an intimate revelation of an artist's private life. Surely such a fact, if true, is not irrelevant. If the book concerned modern American life, its tone and its emotion might very well be colored by the creator's violent revolt against Volsteadism both in theory and in practice.

Some years ago there was great commotion because a literary critic indicted a love story by remarking that the author was a spinster. I hasten to add that it was not my review which brought this severe accusation. I think I would have hesitated to go into the delicate problem of an author's sex experience or lack of it. And yet I cannot maintain that the critic was wholly beyond the domain of legitimate reviewing. The book quite possibly could have been vastly influenced by the author's lack of sophistication.

As it happens, I would not think of contending that no one can write about Du Barry unless she has been Du Barry. I myself intend some day to write a story based on the life of Casanova. When it is published I shall freely grant any critic the right to mention the fact that I have had no share in such interesting romances as brightened the life of the hero. If the critics stress this point it might well be termed an attack upon my ego and my reputation. But any man who writes for publication must accept the fact that he has made himself, by his own act, fair game for friend and foe.

Once upon a time, it might have been sufficient to say that the critic should confine himself wholly to the matter set before him within cloth covers and leave the author and his life and habits quite alone. It becomes increasingly difficult to maintain such a position. I happen to belong to the school which firmly believes that every novel is autobiographical. Even though the writer takes the characters of his story to an unknown city situated on the other side of the moon, still he travels with them. He is writing himself down on paper. How, then, is it possible to leave him out of any comprehensive report upon his poem or play or story? Since he has not left himself out of the story why should the critic leave him out of the review? If Texas Guinan were to write a novel of life in an English parsonage I think any account of the tale would be wholly inadequate if it contained no mention of the fact that Miss Guinan is a night-club hostess.

There was produced during the present theatrical season a poor play by a dramatist of undoubted power. It dealt with marriage. The critics made only veiled references to the undoubted background of the production. It so happened that this was a play about marriage by a young man whose own marriage had but recently collapsed with much attendant bitterness and recrimination. There was no mention of this in the reviews. Naturally enough the critics would be embarrassed to deal roughly with a fine fellow whose soul was still harassed by tribulations. I admit that I would never have brought the matter up into a newspaper review had I been under assignment. And yet only those who knew and understood the personal adventures of the author could have had any comprehension of the curiously acid and almost petulant quality which ran through the play.

I admit that there are places where in all humanity and mercy the line of revelation must be drawn, but it is nonsense to say that the personality of the author is none of the reader's or the critic's business. Everybody will concede that the public has a right to know that the author of "All Quiet on the Western Front" is a German who served in the army during the Great War. Such facts help us to understand and appreciate his point of view. It may be equally useful for us to know in the case of a novel concerning marriage whether it was written by an ex-husband, one about to give hostages to fortune, or one still holding the franchise.

Reticence is an admirable quality under certain circumstances, but it is almost the chief foe of literature. It is an adornment when worn by a gentleman, but a millstone round the neck of any author. It is well enough that we should discourage vulgarity when it rises up to smite us in our own actions or those of our friends, but there will be precious little stuff of any moment written when Emily Post has completed her conquest of the United States. Only a cad can write a first-class biography. It may be a grave offense to kiss and tell, but I fear me that fiction of the first rank cannot be obtained without some such loss of grace.

HEYWOOD BROUN

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Divorce—and After

II. Separation Without Divorce

A PERSONAL NARRATIVE

OUR separation has been on the whole a happy one. As things have worked out, each of us has got out of it about everything that would have had to be fought for if the arrangement had been determined by a contest in the courts. Of course each of us has had to make sacrifices—some of them pretty heavy—which it is proper to charge up in the reckoning as the price of the mistakes we both made in the beginning. I think neither of us is any longer disposed to put all the blame on the other, but my wife undoubtedly feels as certain as I do of having grievances. I am convinced, without any misgivings, that separation was the wise and necessary course, and I trust that my wife is likewise convinced that it was the only solution.

The first article in this series, published last week, indicated the problems of adjustment created when families are broken up by divorce or separation. The present article, to be followed by others of like character, is a personal statement, necessarily anonymous, for whose authenticity we vouch to our readers, of the way in which those problems have been met in a particular case.—EDITOR THE NATION.

Our first mistake was in marrying too young. If we had waited another year or two, my wife would have had time to learn that she was inseparably bound to the church—the church that so wisely warns her children against "mixed marriages." As it was, we married during a lapse of faith on my wife's part, which made it possible for her to assure me quite sincerely that the formal waiver of rights over the education of possible children which I had to sign would have no more force than I should choose to give it. I was too young—only twenty-three—too ignorant of the ways of Mother Church, and too much in love to know that lapses of faith are temporary as a rule and that assurances given off the record are mere chaff before the winnowing breath of Mother Church, while the solemn pledge of an unbeliever is binding forever.

Another thing that I did not know at the time but was immediately to learn was that a family of children is the probable consequence of every marriage in which Mother Church has a hand. The first child was on the way before the first year of our union had passed. The economic problem promptly became acute and remained so through all the years that we remained together. How acute the problem became may be judged by the fact that the number of children was ultimately six. The frictions and anxieties that accompanied this family increase were aggravated by my ever-intensifying disapproval of the religious training to which the children were subjected. I here attempt no justification of my failure to take heroic measures for family limitation, nor do I offer any excuse—other than my quixotic regard for the promise I had made not to interfere—for my inability to cope with the educational problem. Fundamentally the trouble was that in spite of everything we continued for a long time to have a good deal of affection for each other. Besides, the children were all of them children to be proud of and made an additional bond that kept us together past the point when expediency should have separated us.

It would have ultimately become impossible for me to remain a member of the family without insisting on a modification of the part the church was playing in the upbringing of the children. That would have meant an atmosphere of contention which would have made everybody unhappy. The contest would have been one which I could not hope to win, and sooner or later it would have taken the form of a contest for the affections of the children. On the economic side there was nothing in prospect for us but growing debts and ultimate ruin. There was at least a chance that the worst features of the threatening future might be avoided if we broke up the partnership and worked out a new solution.

This much of the background is necessary for the understanding of the terms of our home-made separation. When it came the decision was mine, and it was my abrupt act that made it effective. We have been separated for about ten years. There was no stipulation as to what rights, privileges, and exemptions either one should claim. By voluntarily giving up all claim on the children, I immediately removed the most formidable issue from the area of possible dispute. It was tacitly understood that I should contribute whatever I conveniently could to the support of the family. With the exception of one trying period when I was not earning enough to support even myself, my wife has accepted the situation as she found it without complaining that she was ill-treated. But as I have not been able to carry the whole financial burden alone, my wife herself has been forced to go to work in order to maintain the standard of living which she considers appropriate. This she has done with commendable courage. Her work is dignified and congenial and is of a sort for which she has special qualifications of training and temperament. The fact that she has had a free hand in bringing up the children must go far toward reconciling her to the hardships in her situation. All the children have received or are receiving their education in religious institutions. One of them is a nun.

If my wife has ever used the advantages of her position to turn the children against me, I have seen no sign of it. Of course all of them but the oldest—a boy who left home and the church soon after my defection—are sorry for me and pray diligently for the salvation of my heathen soul. The reason our first-born struck out for himself at the age

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of sixteen was that he had grown weary both of the hot-house atmosphere of the home and of the demands made upon him by the church. He is now happily married and successful in business. He and his wife and I are great friends. The young man and I have the utmost respect and esteem for each other, as well as a warm affection. My acquaintance with the two youngest children was too brief to make any impress on them that is likely to last. That is a part of my sacrifice. The other two children—both attractive and amiable girls—have paid me the spontaneous tribute of genuine affection, where I might have expected nothing better than indifference or tolerant kindness. My sacrifice, so far as they are concerned, is in the fact that, owing to distance and the high cost of travel, I cannot see them as often as I should like.

I have never raised the issue of taking any of the children to live with me. The answer to such a demand would be that I was free to rejoin the family whenever my desire to be with them grew strong enough to impel me to that step. My wife might well claim also that as she has had the sole responsibility for ten years of managing the family and keeping up the home, she is entitled to keep the children near her instead of intrusting them to the dubious influence of a truant father.

According to the conventional view, the worst disadvantage of the arrangement I have described is that it has deprived the children of what is called "a father's care." But I discount that. It was better that they should grow up in peace and piety than that they should have had a father about the place who would daily, before their young observant eyes, be turning into a sour, unsympathetic old grouch. As it is now, when they do occasionally see their father, they meet him as a friend and find him a fairly mellow and kindly old party whom they cannot help liking, though they expect to see him damned at last.

As the account checks up in the end, my wife and I have both got what we felt to be most important. My wife, after enjoying, not without hardship, the companionship of the children in a peaceful and fairly comfortable home, has the assurance of sharing her eternal reward, unless something goes wrong, with all of them but one. As for my part in the bargain, I have won for myself, not without sacrifice, a sort of freedom that makes it possible for me to live my life about as I choose—that is, in interesting occupations, in normal comfort, in total release from exactions by the conscience of others, and under adequate provision for my mental, moral, emotional, and physical health. I believe these blessings were worth the prices we paid for them.

Harvard "Explains"

By GARDNER JACKSON

Boston, February 3

IN answer to widespread criticism, Harvard University has officially explained to her alumni, in a statement by Arthur L. Endicott, controller, that the sudden dismissal of twenty scrubwomen from Widener Library "had nothing to do with the decree of the Minimum Wage Commission except the time at which the change was made." The statement, prepared last week for the Harvard *Alumni Bulletin* and issued to the Boston newspapers, contradicts the letter to the Reverend William H. Duvall of Cambridge in which President A. Lawrence Lowell said: "I find that the Minimum Wage Board has been complaining of our employing women for those purposes at less than thirty-seven cents an hour, and hence the university has felt constrained to replace them with men."

The minimum-wage decree covering "office and other building cleaners" was published from the State House on December 30, 1920, to take effect February 1, 1921. Ignorance of the decree cannot be pleaded. In the first place, under the law copies of it were automatically sent to employers for prominent posting in restrooms of cleaning women. Harvard thus received copies soon after it was published. In the second place, an inspector for the Minimum Wage Commission inspected Harvard early in 1922 on the basis of the thirty-seven-cent decision. The Harvard official did not show the inspector the pay roll but insisted that they were paying wages satisfactory to the commission. This conversation was reported to the commission and should be a part of the record at the State House, if that record is intact. The dismissal of the women at the library discloses the fact that Harvard was, in truth, paying the women thirty-five cents an hour—two cents under the minimum standard—in 1922 but was able to assure the inspector that the wages were satisfactory to the commission on the strength of "an understanding" with a majority of that body. This "understanding," fortified by subsequent conferences and correspondence, including a conference at the State House in 1925 between the commission and "Nelson Perkins"—presumably Thomas Nelson Perkins, member of the Harvard Corporation (now president of the Boston and Maine Railroad)—enabled Harvard to evade the law in comparative peace till the last inspection which took place in February, 1928.

At that time inspectors for the commission persuaded that body to try to make Harvard increase the wages of the women to conform to the decree. Mr. Endicott, in an interview with a New York newspaperman following his official explanation, was blunt in saying that he had an "understanding" with the commission that the women's wages were "all right." Hence the relative lack of trouble—over two cents an hour—from 1921 to 1928. It is, as the *World* has said, "incredible . . . like a chapter from Dickens."

The first part of Mr. Endicott's official explanation describes the reorganization, started in 1921, of the Harvard buildings administration under a central head. It says next: "The new policy was approved in April, 1929, and at that time I wrote the Minimum Wage Commission that we proposed to replace the women cleaners in Widener Library with men as soon after July 1, 1929, as we had opportunity to find other employment for the former. It was not at all a question of wages; it was the question of following the policy which we had found from our experience to be eco-

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nomical and efficient." Why did Mr. Endicott write to the Minimum Wage Commission if wages were not at issue? And what about the wages from April till the end of the year, when the women were dismissed?

Further on Mr. Endicott says: "In October, after giving entirely adequate notice, we replaced some of the women who were the least capable and we notified the Minimum Wage Commission that we wished a little longer time in order to find other employment for the remainder." Again, why did Mr. Endicott notify the Minimum Wage Commission if Harvard was violating no wage decree? I have talked with twelve of the women since Mr. Endicott's statement was issued. They all emphatically deny that any of the group was given advance notice. They received their written notices the day the discharge took effect.

When the Minimum Wage Commission sent its ultimatum of December 18, 1929, threatening that if on December 26 any of the women were still employed in the library at less than the thirty-seven-cent rate, it would exercise its right to publish a notice to the effect that the university was not complying with its decree, Harvard immediately dismissed the remaining women. The hope was expressed in their notes of dismissal, as in the case of the earlier dismissals, that other work would be found for them at the university. "All of the women whom we discharged in December," continues Mr. Endicott, "have either been offered work or given employment, with the exception of two. In the case of one, her son has been employed." Four of the women, Mrs. Selina Taylor, Mrs. H. Sullivan, Miss Catharine Donlon, and Mrs. H. Malloy, went to work almost immediately from the library to the dormitories—on their own application—at the reduced rate of thirty-two cents an hour for so-called chambermaid work, though, by their own account, this work involves as much scrubbing as the library work. (Harvard officials asked the commission that these dormitory women be classified as chambermaids, a category outside the minimum-wage law.) Two more of the women, Mrs. Annie McIntyre and Mrs. Hannah Hogan, so Mrs. McIntyre told me, were sent for and offered temporary work as substitutes in the dormitories at the thirty-two-cent rate. Since they wanted steady jobs at the minimum-wage level, they refused this offer. Four others, Miss Annie J. Corcoran, Mrs. Catharine Curran, Miss Margaret O'Connors, and Mrs. Emma Trafton, told me they have not been offered any kind of work at Harvard since their discharge. None of the group dismissed on November 1, 1929, has been offered work as I write this. Thus four of the twenty women dismissed are at work at Harvard and two were tendered temporary work. Mr. Endicott's statement gives a very different impression.

At one point Mr. Endicott's statement says: "It is not customary in industry, I believe, to pay employees hired by the hour for time when they are out sick, or for vacations. In the case of these women we have done both, and the amount of pay received on account of sick leave and vacations much more than equaled the difference about which the Minimum Wage Commission has complained." Each of the twelve women whom I have interviewed since Mr. Endicott's statement was issued vehemently denied to me that they or their associates ever received a penny from Harvard for sick leave or when out because of injury. "We were paid by the month," declared Miss Corcoran, "and pay for the days we were out sick was always taken out of our money at the end of the month. I don't know how he dares say such a thing." Miss Corcoran had worked in the library for ten years.

The vacation pay, the women said, consisted of one week's pay for a six-day week of three hours a day at thirty-five cents an hour—a total of $6.30, even though the majority of the women worked five hours a day—from 6 a. m. to 11 a. m. Mr. Endicott may fairly be asked how that vacation pay of $6.30 a year "much more than equaled the difference about which the Minimum Wage Commission has complained." The vacation pay amounted to $56.70 for each woman during the approximately nine years that Harvard was ignoring the minimum-wage law. Compare these figures with the $31.20 a year which the increase of two cents an hour asked by the Minimum Wage Commission would have meant to each woman, or a total of $280.80 for each woman who had been there during the almost nine years in which the decree was in effect. The majority of the women had been at Harvard ten years or more.

Mr. Endicott's statement minimizes the importance to the women of the wages paid them for their work at Widener Library. It is true that some of them had other cleaning jobs in the afternoons. "But," says Mrs. McIntyre, echoing all her associates, "who gets up at 5 a. m. every morning winter and summer to go to a job unless the pay means a lot to her? It's no joke, I can tell you. And this was steady work—thirteen years of it for me."

In his concluding paragraph, attempting to justify the replacement of the women by men, Mr. Endicott asserts: "We have not at any time attempted to violate the Minimum Wage Law." There is no need to argue with him. The facts speak for themselves: the Minimum Wage decree became effective February 1, 1921; the first inspection took place early in 1922; the women were dismissed November 1 and December 21, 1929, about eight years later, under pressure from the Minimum Wage Commission.

To delegations of protest Mr. Endicott has shown noticeable irritation at the Minimum Wage Law as interpreted on the ground that all Harvard employees would want pay based on minimum-wage levels if the scale had prevailed for the Widener women. His stock conclusion for all questioners is that employees would rather work at Harvard for lower wages because of "pleasant working conditions" and because there is a certain "prestige" about working at Harvard University!

It is rumored that certain prominent citizens who have the moral health of Harvard at heart are assembling facts with a view to requesting that the university pay to these scrubwomen the additional two cents an hour which it should have paid them during the years after the State set the thirty-seven-cent minimum. That amount of money would come as a substantial blessing to some of the women and it would not put too great a strain on the finances of Harvard University, since it would amount in all to something under $5,000 for the twenty women. Such an act of penitence, though it might ruffle Harvard officialdom, would have an extremely salutary effect upon those Olympian dwellers. Moreover, it might be useful, especially to the workers whom the Minimum Wage Commission is supposed to protect, if that body were asked to explain why Harvard was permitted to evade its decrees for nine years.

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Secretary Wilbur and Boulder Dam

By RUTH FINNEY

Washington, February 10

THOUGH liquor has monopolized the speeches and the statements and the headlines in the capital this winter, it is water that is engaging the serious concern of those with most at stake in Washington. In and out among all other questions, among the noisy sham battles and the grim quiet struggles, the water-power issue seeps and flows. In the Northwest an ally of the Electric Bond and Share Company is trying to secure control of power on the Flathead River. All the private interests that have wanted Muscle Shoals are uniting to make sure of success in their next attempt to get it. Before the Federal Trade Commission, power companies are attempting to justify their financial, operating, and propaganda methods. The Federal Power Commission, titular guardian of the public's power resources, is under fire from several directions. Most serious of all, the Federal Water Power Act itself, Magna Charta of public power development, faces nullification. The power from Boulder Dam, worth hundreds of millions of dollars, is being leased. Since last June, Secretary of the Interior Wilbur has been working on plans for the disposal of this power.

Congress looked on passively while the Secretary rejected the plan for a government-built, equipped, and operated power plant, as made possible by the Boulder Dam Act, and announced that he would sell the falling water at the dam, an alternative method of financing the project which friends of the measure expected him to resort to only if all others failed. Congress exhibited slightly more concern when he announced a tentative allocation of power giving almost one-fourth to private power companies, although States and cities, expressly given a preference right in the Boulder Dam Act, were asking for all the power. Little was said, however, because those most familiar with the matter thought the Secretary would find, when the legal business of drawing contracts was begun, that State and municipal applicants must be given the power they wanted.

Secretary Wilbur's next move was to put certain questions concerning the Boulder Dam situation to his legal adviser, E. C. Finney—the same Finney who figured so prominently in the Teapot Dome and Elk Hills oil cases. Solicitor Finney's answers constituted an interpretation of the Boulder Dam Act and the Federal Water Power Act which swept away, in effect, all the preference rights provided for public agencies. He said, in answer to Secretary Wilbur's leading questions, that the Secretary would be justified, in the "public interest," in ignoring the preference rights of States and cities if "other applicants" offered better financial security and greater contractual responsibility.

Congress first looked at this opinion in dazed silence, and then roused itself to insist that it should know better than any department solicitor what it means when it writes law. And now, for its water-power act and its integrity as a law-making body, Congress has taken up the cudgels and is preparing to fight. Senator George W. Norris, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, has sounded warning that to permit Solicitor Finney's opinion to be adopted as the basis for power contracts will leave the executive branch of government free to nullify any act of Congress at any time. Senator Hiram W. Johnson, one of the authors of the Boulder Dam Act, has expressed dismay and a determination to fight. Representative Philip D. Swing, co-author of the act, has prepared a brief, warning the Administration that "to graft into a law by interpretation a policy that Congress had deliberately declared should be no part of that law is executive usurpation."

During the years when the Boulder Dam bill was pending in Congress the private power companies, with one voice, fought it. They said the government must control floods on the Colorado but must not generate power at its dam, because to do so would be "red." Once the bill was passed and authority given for a great public power development, the Southern California Edison Company and the Southern Sierras Power Company began asking for all or part of that power. But southern California cities wanted the power also, to supply to their people over publicly owned distributing systems and to pump their drinking water. Together with the State of Nevada, they asked for more power than Boulder Dam will produce. The Boulder Dam bill had been framed with these needs in mind and the provision to meet them. The cities had done battle for it for years because they were sure it safeguarded their interests. Mr. Wilbur, however, said he believed the Edison Company and its associates should be given a share of the power. He tentatively allocated to them about one-fourth of the output, an amount as great as that given Los Angeles and more than four times as great as that given smaller cities. He provided that Los Angeles and its ancient enemy, the Edison Company, should jointly equip the Boulder Dam power plant and jointly operate it.

Los Angeles and her smaller neighbors protested and claimed a right to priority over the company in allocation of power. They pointed to the wording of the Boulder Dam Act. This act had been drawn with just such a controversy in mind, and its authors thought it was drawn in such a way as to leave no doubt as to what must be done. It provided that the States of Nevada, Arizona, and California should have first opportunity to buy power within a limited time. After that, conflicting applications were to be settled by the Secretary of the Interior "with due regard to the public interest and in conformity with the policy expressed in the Federal Water Power Act"—a policy contained in these words:

> The commission shall give preference to applications by States and municipalities, provided the plans for the same are deemed by the commission equally well adapted, or shall within a reasonable time, to be fixed by the commission, be made equally well adapted, to conserve and utilize in the public interest the navigation and water resources of the region.

In the past the Federal Power Commission has given preference to State and municipal applications for power because of this wording. But the commission was wrong in

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that interpretation, says the Southern California Edison Company in effect, for the "public interest" in the present case requires that Boulder Dam power be allocated to the company, because the company has almost a million customers. Secretary Wilbur, already on record as in substantial agreement with this view, put to Solicitor Finney these questions:

> What is meant by the public interest? What body of people comprises the public as the act uses the term? Is the interest referred to as public the government's responsibility to the whole people of the United States or is it the interest of the area to be immediately served by Boulder Dam power, or is it the interest of a particular part of that area?

Mr. Finney replied as follows:

> Public interest is one of those broad terms like "public policy" capable of different legitimate interpretations in the discretion of the officer called upon to administer it. The interest referred to is primarily the government's responsibility, financial or otherwise, to all the people of the United States for the greatest good to be derived from this project, the cost of which is to be advanced from the public treasury. The term "public interest" is the dominant consideration. . . . The primary public interest is in the soundness of the contracts and the solvency of the contractor, not in the corporate or municipal character of that contractor. . . . The public interest requires . . . equality of access to Boulder Dam power by areas composing the region in proportion to the needs of the applicants.

This means, said Representative Swing in his answering brief, that "you [Secretary Wilbur] have asked your adviser in what direction to travel to reach your goal and he has answered, 'In any direction you choose to proceed.' "

> The words "public interest" used in the Boulder Dam Act [continues the brief] were intended to mean exactly the opposite of private interest. . . .
>
> If the solicitor's opinion is to be accepted that the words "due regard to the public interest" must be construed as a check upon preference rights given municipalities by the Federal Water Power Act, then indeed a strange irony of fate has here played its part, because by this contention the municipalities are to be grievously injured by a weapon forged by them as an aid for the defense of their rights.
>
> The effort of the solicitor to introduce the foreign factor of finance in the interpretation of public interest to subordinate the preference rights of municipalities was not contemplated by Congress and must not be countenanced. The financial interest of the United States was safeguarded in other sections of the act.
>
> Congress meant and intended and declared that whenever possible the public, that is the people, should get the benefits of the development of this great public resource through their own public agencies, direct and at cost, without . . . paying profits to a private power corporation.

It is customary in disputes of this sort to search through debates of the Congress that enacted a law in order to arrive at a clearer understanding of its intention. The Sixty-fifth Congress passed the Federal Water Power Act. When the act was pending it considered two alternative ways of treating the section about preference rights for public agencies. It was proposed at that time to leave the question of preferences to the discretion of the power commission. This proposal was debated in the House of Representatives and voted down. The House instead adopted the section that is now law. In the Senate debate it was referred to as making mandatory the recognition of municipal and State projects. This interpretation was not challenged. The section became part of the law as enacted.

In the year following, the Sixty-sixth Congress strengthened the position of public agencies by providing that even when the Federal Power Commission found plans of a private company more acceptable for utilizing the water resources of a region, public agencies should be given a chance to make their plans equally acceptable. This amendment, Congress believed, closed the door to any possible attempt to defeat preference rights for public development. If a city could adopt a corporation's plans, the question of difference in suitability therefore could not arise. There is still other evidence to show the frame of mind of Congress on this question as recently as December, 1928. Senator Reed of Pennsylvania offered an amendment to the Boulder Dam Act providing that the government should not construct, equip, and operate a power plant at the dam unless it failed to find anyone else willing to do so. The amendment was defeated. With the policy of federal power development established, no attempt was made to attack the subordinate rights of States and cities. It was thought to be futile to do so. And the question would never have arisen if Secretary Wilbur had not departed from the approved plan for a government-built and operated power house.

Mr. Wilbur asked another question that is even more significant, and Mr. Finney made another answer that is even more amazing. To appreciate them it is necessary to remember that the Boulder Dam Act says that no application of a city or State for power shall be denied or an application in conflict therewith granted on the ground that bonds have not yet been voted to finance the proposed work. Secretary Wilbur wrote to Mr. Finney:

> If Los Angeles and other municipalities cannot now execute enforceable contracts meeting reasonable financial requirements of the Secretary, what would be the duty of the Secretary under provisions of the act that an application is not to be denied because of the necessity for a bond issue? Would he be authorized to make contracts with other bidders preserving to the preference claimants the right to contract for part of the power if enforceable contracts are tendered within a designated time?

The Solicitor wrote to Mr. Wilbur:

> This proviso is not designed to tie the hands of the Secretary pending the authorization and marketing of the bond issue so long as the right of the preference claimants to contract for power allocated to them is preserved.

He went on to explain that while the Secretary could not grant an application in conflict with the city's, an application and a contract were two different things, and a contract would be proper that preserved the right of a city to contract within a reasonable time "when, as, and if the necessary bond issue is authorized." To Los Angeles, whose bond issues have been defeated before now by the Edison Company, this has an ominous sound. Representative Swing points out that "private companies once having secured control of the power would be forced by self-interest to immediately engage in a political campaign in every city that was an expected beneficiary to defeat, if possible, the bond issue."

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Not power, but the right to batter and bruise themselves fighting for it, may be the privilege of the cities of the Southwest under the bill for which they worked so many years, with such high hopes. Congress will have the last word in this fight because it alone can appropriate money to build Boulder Dam, and, in appropriating, it can make any requirements for use of its money that it sees fit. It can, if it will, exert a substantial veto over any contracts Secretary Wilbur makes.

The more or less spectacular aspects of this controversy may, it is possible, focus new interest on the duller aspects of the general power war. No one denies the importance of proper accounting in the Federal Power Commission, where companies, unless curbed, may build up vast and fabulous capitalization claims to serve as the basis for future recapture proceedings and future rates. But neither is anyone fired with potent indignation about it. The issues are difficult to present now. There are so many things to be done.

The Boulder Dam fight, on the other hand, has immediate interest for all parts of the country. On its outcome hangs, to some extent, the fate of Muscle Shoals and of every other water-power project, great or small. Senator Norris declares that its outcome will determine who shall make the law of the United States.

Mexico Instals a New President

By LYLE C. WILSON

MEXICO accomplished a change of administration on February 5 under circumstances promising more good than evil, greater success than failure, better conditions rather than worse. But it is only a promise. As Emilio Portes Gil departs and Pascual Ortiz Rubio enters the presidential palace, from opposition throats comes the challenging accusation of fraud, duplicity, and murder. And unhappily, within two hours of his inauguration President Rubio is struck down by the bullet of a would-be assassin whose act reminds us of the constant threat of death that overhangs the chief executive of our southern neighbor. Fortunately, the wound seems not to be mortal.

Jose Vasconcelos was Rubio's defeated opponent for the presidency. Vasconcelistas proclaim that Ortiz Rubio was elevated to that office by a combination of violence and thievery at the polls by which the National Revolutionary Party prevented the people from making effective their collective enthusiasm for Vasconcelos. Some measure of fraud did prevail in Mexico on election Sunday. There were intimidation and violence at various polling places, on the evidence of the Mexicans themselves, and denial of the franchise with no more justification for it than ability to exert essential force. That Vasconcelistas suffered most from this crime against democracy appears indisputable. But that Vasconcelos would have been chosen under ideal conditions is subject to doubt. The margin of his defeat seems too great.

In view of Mexican electoral practices, it must be doubted that Vasconcelos himself could have expected election. In their effort to prevent machine control of electoral procedure, the Mexicans have leaned over backward so far that instead of protecting their polling places they have polluted them with good intentions gone wrong. At the cornerstone of Mexico's elaborate system of protection for the polls is a prescribed precinct procedure designed to prevent government officials—minions of the party in power—from controlling the ballot. The first eleven qualified, ordinary electors, privately employed or unemployed, who arrive at the polling place must organize the precinct voting machinery, pass on qualifications of other voters, supervise and report the poll. Under these conditions the precinct is likely to be carried by the candidate whose supporters first reach and organize the precinct polling place. Picture such a procedure in New York. It needs no strain on the imagination to understand that Tammany would be first on the job even in precincts where registered Republicans were scarce. And Tammany would be charged by the Republicans with stealing precincts which Republicans couldn't have won even if every Republican in the district had been allowed to vote twice.

That seems to approximate what took place in more than a few places in Mexico last November. Whether such tactics produced ballots essential to Ortiz Rubio's election cannot be said, at least by this writer. He believes it did not. Violence by Ortiz Rubio's henchmen provoked the editor of *El Dictamen* of Vera Cruz to discuss the matter on November 19 beneath the caption, Our Democratic Failure. "In this port," the editor related, "we saw them [the government faction] gaining possession of polling booths which they could not secure in any other way by shooting; we saw that the polling lists were defective in order to hinder the voting of members of the opposing party; that the ballots of the opposing party were not accepted."

Elsewhere, among comparatively impartial observers, emphasis was placed rather upon the relative absence of violence last November as compared with prior elections. But more important than this abatement of violent folkways was the presence of two parties in the field instead of one, even though the margin between their polls was tremendous. And the trend from militarists to civilians for the presidential office is significant from whatever standpoint Mexico may be surveyed. Portes Gil is a civilian but he also is a political accident. Ortiz Rubio is a civilian, an engineer by coincidence, but no accident. He or his like was inevitable soon in Mexico if the republic was to prevail. True, Ortiz Rubio holds office largely by grace of General Plutarco Elias Calles, Mexico's strong man. It is also true that Calles's support is practically synonymous with the support of the army. But within ten years the Mexican army has changed. A new crop of generals has succeeded the revolutionary veterans whose high-handed and repeated recourse to rebellion gradually disposed of them via courts martial and firing squads. The newer militarists are Calles's pupils, not his peers.

The brighter stars of Calles's Cabinet, in general, owe allegiance to the new President. For the present, at least, Ortiz Rubio may count upon useful support from the labor

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group and the agrarians. Their interests will not always coincide and it remains to be proved that Ortiz Rubio is strong enough to maintain political discipline. The National Revolutionary Party, of which Calles was the founder and Ortiz Rubio has become the nominal head, has its blocs and insurgents. Already Rubio's campaign support is dividing into cliques, one recognizing Calles as the man behind the throne and the other insisting that Ortiz Rubio shall lead as well as march in front. The new President's policies must be founded upon the necessity for keeping his mixed support contented. It is axiomatic that no Mexican rebellion can succeed without at least negative assistance from the United States Government, for rebels must have arms and munitions. Therefore, foreign policy number one in Ortiz Rubio's administration will be to cultivate American friendship. That Washington will not rebuff but will welcome that policy is a fact to inspire hope. The unprecedented official welcome given the Mexican President-elect in the American capital foretold much, specifically that the Morrow era of Mexican-American relations will not fade if the United States can prevent it.

With American good-will in mind, Ortiz Rubio will modify the land-seizing agrarian policy somewhat, especially with respect to seizure without immediate compensation. That means some slowing-up of the seizure program and the new President must travel that road carefully, for his agrarian supporters are land-hungry. Ortiz Rubio hopes to liberate isolated communities by provision of roads. Mexico will sow pesos and reap schoolhouses if the pesos can be had. Above all, Ortiz Rubio will look to his credit at home. The army will be paid regularly. It is very necessary to pay the army regularly. Not long after Ambassador Morrow went to Mexico he advised President Calles that the best of all policies to follow would be to maintain his credit at home before satisfying creditors abroad. The current budget set aside 26,000,000 pesos for the public debt, but the proportion to be devoted to international obligations is not established. Foreign bankers and investors, particularly private investors, are not happy as they contemplate this situation. They do not appreciate the advice Morrow gave Calles. They hope Ortiz Rubio will forget about it. They have received almost nothing since 1914. Short of a Dawes plan for Mexico it appears they will not soon receive more. The idea of a Dawes plan—in which Mexico's capacity to pay would be compared with her obligations, and the two, somehow, be made to balance—has been discussed informally. Such procedure would reduce Mexico's current international debt, which amounts to 1,900,000,000 pesos.

The appointment of Calles to the Mexican National Railway Administration may foretell a beginning of a better day for the investors. At present the railway operates at a loss, its pay roll choked by political employees. It is a personnel problem that Calles must undertake. The howls of the discharged will echo along the right of way, and it would not be surprising if a bridge here and there were consumed in fiery protest. But once purged of graft, and freed from revolutionary destruction, the railway may thrive and its bondholders fatten.

Meanwhile, two essentials to Mexican well-being have already been achieved: the first is Washington's substitution of understanding for suspicion in Mexican-American relations; the second is the armistice in religious warfare.

In the Driftway

CHARLES H. INGERSOLL, one of the brothers who made the dollar famous by the manufacture of a watch, who is now trying to perpetuate the dollar's reputation through making a fountain pen, writes in regard to an idea of his "which one of your recent articles reminded me of—namely, a fleet of sailing vessels plying regularly across the Atlantic, designed primarily for passengers." The idea "may be a crazy notion," Mr. Ingersoll goes on to say, "but I think there would be plenty of patronage." And the patronage would come "not only from the idle rich" but from "millions of people, with more or less sporting blood, some of them desiring long passage and all enjoying the sea and sailing." Also "there might be a price consideration which would settle the question of popularity. If the overhead were small enough, for the average wage person the saving in dollars might offset the time wasted."

* * * * *

BEFORE going any farther the Drifter must rap Mr. Ingersoll on the knuckles for the final word in that last sentence. Probably Mr. Ingersoll did not actually mean "time wasted" or he would not have broached the main suggestion, but the idea that time spent in the manner described would be wasted is so typical of American thinking that the phrase slipped unconsciously into Mr. Ingersoll's letter. As to the scheme proposed, the Drifter thinks so well of it that if he had a little money to play with he would like nothing better than to carry it out. These words are chosen advisedly. The financial possibilities of the project do not appear so rosy that a man would be justified in putting into it any hard-earned capital on which he had to live, but if one had a little extra—if one ever does have that—the venture would be a fascinating one and in the end might turn out profitable to boot. The Drifter cannot envisage Mr. Ingersoll's "millions" of passengers, and the word "fleet" sounds a bit ambitious. Probably four vessels would be enough. Allowing thirty days for the trip across the Atlantic Ocean, this would make possible a schedule of semi-monthly sailings—quite sufficient with which to start.

* * * * *

THE Drifter does not believe that sailing vessels could be run so cheaply as to attract passengers for financial reasons. But this would not be necessary for the success of the project. This is a day in which there is a pronounced urge to get away—especially for one's vacation—from the conventional and the mechanical. People are glad to pay more nowadays to live in primitive fashion in summer camps than it would cost them to have all the comforts of a first-class hotel, and among persons having vacations of two to three months there must be many who would jump at the chance to go to Europe on a windjammer. Probably it would not be worth while to operate a transatlantic service for more than six months of the year, but the ships need not be laid up for the rest of the time. Winter sailings could be arranged to West Indian or South American ports, or cruises could be organized—to the South Seas or other warm and quiet waters.

THE DRIFTER

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Correspondence

A Farmer Subscribes

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: When I read in certain Eastern papers of the remarkable prosperity you have had during the past eight years, I rise to reply: "It never touched us here in the wheat belt of northern Montana." The agricultural marketing act has engendered a new hope but many fear it will prove a dud. The only way to make ends meet is to cut one's standard of living.

I am trying out *The Nation,* hoping the editor will have the vision to see this far west. Today at my local elevator it takes five and one-third bushels of No. 1 Northern to pay for your magazine for one year. This would bread the editor for twelve months, I know.

You seem to have a passion for justice so I am hoping we may be good friends.

Hogeland, Montana, January 17 P. T. ANDERSON

"Darkness for Light"

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Please discontinue my subscription to *The Nation.* If you care for a reason, you can find it in a book, a copy of which you may have in your morgue, the Bible. I refer you to Isaiah, fifth chapter, twentieth verse.

Oregon, Ill., January 14 D. A. RICHARDSON

One of the Real Heroes

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: If you are accepting supplementary nominations for your Honor Roll for 1929, I should like to propose the name of Elmer Smith, the labor lawyer of Centralia, Washington, who, without remuneration, without publicity, and with only a handful of supporters, has given ten years of his life, his health, his professional standing (the State bar association disbarred him in an unsportsmanlike attempt to silence him) to an unflagging agitation for the release of eight men railroaded to prison under sentences of twenty-five to forty years for defending their union hall against a mob of lynchers. I consider him one of the real heroes of the present time.

New York, January 24 FREDERICK A. BLOSSOM

A Soviet Prison

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I hope that Winthrop D. Lane, who wrote the article, Science and Crime, will soon make a trip to Soviet Russia so that when he writes again about prisons, he will also speak about prison conditions in the Soviet Union. A visit to a long-term prison here was of considerable interest to a group of about a dozen Americans. We entered, went all over the place, and were permitted to speak freely to the prisoners with no guard present. Since we were not searched, it would have been the easiest thing in the world to have passed guns and saws to the prisoners, but escapes were unknown, according to the head guard.

We saw the prisoners working in the factory. We spoke to them (the guard was not present) and were informed they work eight hours a day, for which they are paid. Later we saw the inmates in their cells, having dinner. The food was plain, but tasty and nourishing. A loud speaker in each cell supplied music during the meal. There was also a library and clubroom which they could visit after working hours. The prisoners mentioned that there was no corporal punishment. The only complainers were two ex-commissars who had taken graft and felt unjustly treated because they were there "for nothing."

Moscow, January 9 HARRY JAFFE

Boy-Scout Militarism

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: A bill has been introduced into the New York Assembly which proposes to make boy-scout training compulsory in the public schools of this State for boys of ten to eighteen, and requires as well that they devote a considerable part of their present leisure, non-school time for this purpose.

Such a law would introduce military training into our public schools, under the seemingly innocent guise of boy-scout work. The measure cannot pretend to be simply for the better physical training of our children in the grammar schools. If it were intended to accomplish this purpose, the extension of gymnasium and playground facilities, together with the present exercises practiced in the schools, would be ample to satisfy this object.

The proposition requires for its execution the wearing of uniforms, submission to "commanders," drills, and all the routine and paraphernalia of the scouts. It is plainly conceived in a military spirit with a view to advancing the idea of military practice and preparedness among the children in our schools. I respectfully submit that such a law would be out of harmony with the democratic ideals and the best traditions of our Republic, and certainly not in line with the efforts of the United States to help bring about international peace.

New York, February 3 ABRAHAM A. CONAN

Contributors to This Issue

GARDNER JACKSON is an independent and courageous Boston journalist.

RUTH FINNEY has covered the story of Boulder Dam since 1923 for the Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance.

LYLE C. WILSON is a Washington newspaperman specially conversant with Latin American affairs.

RUTH LECHLITNER frequently contributes poetry to the magazines.

HENRY HAZLITT is literary editor of *The Nation.*

NORMAN THOMAS is one of the directors of the League for Industrial Democracy and a contributing editor of *The Nation.*

ROYAL J. DAVIS is a member of the editorial staff of the New York *Evening Post.*

DONALD A. ROBERTS is a member of the department of English at the College of the City of New York.

FRED T. MARSH writes occasional book reviews for *The Nation.*

GRANVILLE HICKS is assistant professor of English at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

ALEXANDER BAKSHY writes on motion pictures for *The Nation.*

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Books, Films, Drama

Cocoon

By RUTH LECHLITNER

Some supple creature, smooth as jade, and still
As a tenacious sphinx upon the green
Protective leaf, set her small mouth at will
To taste the flesh of summer. Carven clean
This branch, lace-ribbed, is frescoed on the bough
And braced to catch the web, to hold a skein
For the swift spinner and the silk that now
Cradles a sleeper from the bitter rain.

What word is woven with this little death
From the neat pattern of a dream, to wake
The mummy-chrysalis, to stir the breath
Within this brittle case, and deftly shake
From its thin sheath the fearful, folded wing
Out on the green, young branches of the spring?

Tradition and Experiment

Tradition and Experiment in Present-Day Literature. Addresses Delivered at the City Literary Institute of London. Oxford University Press. $2.50.

THE most useful terms of literary criticism are ghosts; the hand passes through them, grasping nothing solid. From a volume such as this, the reader expects to emerge with his ideas sharpened and clarified; he is likely, instead, to find himself more in a fog than ever.

Here are essays by ten writers, writing by pairs on five branches of literary art, the first of the pair discussing his branch in relation to tradition, the second in relation to experiment. One looks for clean divisions of opinion, for a series of five debates. One finds, in fact, that not a single contributor has been willing to throw in his lot entirely either with tradition or with experiment, nor does he even seem willing to admit that he knows precisely the difference between them.

R. H. Mottram, opening with a paper on Tradition in the Novel, begins by remarking that "the general tradition in the English novel, as in anything else that is English, is to have no strongly marked tradition," and adds that "it would hardly be too much to say that the tradition of the English novel is experiment." J. D. Beresford, writing on Experiment in the Novel, confesses that he is confronted by the same difficulty—that of "defining a recognizable tradition in English fiction to which I might conclusively point the exceptions." And he, too, concludes that "our best novelists have always been experimenters."

In spite of these remarks, both Mr. Mottram and Mr. Beresford do try to characterize the tradition of the English novel, and add point to their original misgivings by disagreeing on a simple question of fact, for Mr. Mottram thinks that tradition "in the main . . . a weakly romantic one," while Mr. Beresford is equally confident that "the tradition of the English novel has always been realistic in the main." But then, if we cannot tell the difference between tradition and experiment, how can we be expected to know the difference between realism and romance?

Mr. Beresford makes the point that the great novelists whom we now look back upon as traditional were in their own time experimenters. Those of their experiments that failed, or were for some reason inimitable, are still regarded as experiments; but most of their experiments inspired succeeding authors to copy them, and "this successive copying is the sole means by which an experiment becomes in the course of the centuries an accepted tradition."

When we come to Tradition in Drama, we find Ashley Dukes reminding us once more that "tradition is surely no more than the fruit of successful experiment." C. K. Munro, supposedly writing on Experiment in Drama, gives in fact very little attention to that subject, but wanders off into a consideration of the nature of art in general. Nor is he the only contributor who can be accused of departing from his assignment. T. S. Eliot, under the title of Experiment in Criticism, devotes merely his first paragraph to all that he has to say about the dubious distinction between "traditional" and "experimental" work in literary criticism, and thereafter writes about the changes in the last century in the scope of the critic's knowledge, and about our curious modern habit of living in the future: "We hardly have time to get any fun out of what is being written now, so concerned are we about the quality of what may be written fifty years hence."

Much of the confusion that surrounds these discussions of tradition and experiment is the result, I think, of the vagueness of both terms; for the meaning of each is indefinitely extensible. There is a sense in which writing of any kind is impossible without tradition. The reader of this review can understand it only because each word is to him not an unintelligible black smudge on a white background, but a symbol which has the meaning, or group of meanings, that tradition has given to it. On the other hand, nearly every sentence, no matter how ordinary, is to some degree an experiment: it is an assembling of words in a unique and hitherto non-existent order. We do not ordinarily recognize experiment as such unless it is an unusual type of experiment; and we do not recognize tradition as such unless it is *not* all-pervading. Gertrude Stein and James Joyce, for example, have sharpened our notions of what we mean by a traditional sentence and a traditional word.

Of all the writers in the present symposium, it has remained for Edith Sitwell, writing on Experiment in Poetry, to offer as satisfactory a brief summary of the respective roles of tradition and experiment in literature as we are likely to get:

> The truth is, that the great poet is, in almost every case, both a traditionalist and an experimentalist. He does not forget the discoveries made and the examples shown by his great predecessors, but, at the same time, he *must* bring some freshness into the language, some technical innovation, some new discovery of the world of sight or sound, else he is merely an echo, and will not take his place among his predecessors.

HENRY HAZLITT

Chain-Store Civilization

The Passing of Normalcy. By Charles W. Wood. B. C. Forbes Publishing Company. $3.

CHARLES W. WOOD is a writer with a knack for shrewd observation and a skill in a sort of writing that is easy to read. These gifts he is now applying to the new gospel of salvation by Big Business, which, it seems, has discovered or is discovering that the way to prosperity is to make everybody prosperous. We are to be saved by scientific mass production. Mr. Wood's latest book is a sermon on this theme with Marion, Ohio, as its background and the role of the chain stores as its principal preoccupation. Indeed, as Mr. Wood explains with scrupulous honesty, the book grew out of a

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suggestion from the chain-store men, and the study was somewhat aided by them although the results were not quite in line with their desires. Mr. Wood makes no Middletown study of Marion, but he does make some sound and shrewd observations about it, and tells us rather vividly how and why the old days of normalcy are passing—which is a very different matter from proving the adequacy of his gospel. It remains to be seen how far he can convince even the business leaders to whom he appeals. And if he convinces them, there are still problems inherent in landlordism, Wall Street speculation, and the whole profit system which make this reviewer pretty skeptical about the capacity of Big Business as we know it to achieve that "more abundant life for everybody" which Mr. Wood thinks is its logical object. But the book contains a prophecy which ought to warm the hearts of thousands of underpaid employees of chain stores. Mr. Wood is sure that those stores "will some day take a conspicuous leadership in the movement for higher wages." Here's hoping. NORMAN THOMAS

Spring-Rice's Career

The Letters and Friendships of Sir Cecil Spring-Rice. A Record. Edited by Stephen Gwynn. Two volumes. Houghton Mifflin Company. $10.

TWO young men, one an American, the other an Englishman, crossed from New York to London in November, 1886. The Englishman had been told of the American, who had just been defeated in the election for Mayor of New York, and introduced himself. The acquaintance ripened into friendship so rapidly that within a month the Englishman was acting as best man at the American's wedding in London. Fifteen years later the American was President of the United States; twelve more years and the Englishman was British Ambassador at Washington. Romance would have had Roosevelt President when Spring-Rice was Ambassador, with the two joining hands to take the United States into the war beside Great Britain. History, which is made of sterner stuff, sent Spring-Rice to Washington as one of the secretaries of the British legation in 1887 for a year, sent him back in 1889 for two years, again in 1894 for a year, in 1905 for a visit of a few days, and finally in 1913 for what were destined to be the last five years of his diplomatic career and of his life.

Thus he served at Washington for considerable periods in the administrations of three Presidents—Harrison, Cleveland, and Wilson—but his activity there during the Presidency of the friend with whom he had stood up as best man was limited to the brief visit in 1905 when he was first secretary of the British embassy at St. Petersburg. The war between Russia and Japan was approaching a crisis, and Roosevelt suggested that Spring-Rice, who had rather unconventionally been supplying him with information from the Russian capital, should give him the benefit of his knowledge and judgment in person. Hence the extraordinary visit, which was followed a few months later by Roosevelt's proposal to the two belligerents to send representatives to a peace conference—a move which resulted in the treaty of Portsmouth.

When Spring-Rice first came to Washington he was an almost total stranger, but in a short time his capacity for making friends—one of his strongest traits—had brought him into the circle of what Mr. Gwynn characterizes as "perhaps the most distinguished group of men and women that America could then show." It was the group of which Henry Adams was the center and which included John Hay, whose house was near that of Adams, Senator Cameron of Pennsylvania, Senator Lodge, Roosevelt, and in particular two brilliant women, Mrs. Cameron and Mrs. Lodge. Throughout his subsequent absences from Washington—at the British Foreign Office 1888-89, at the British legation in Tokio 1892-93, at the British embassy in Berlin 1895-98, at Constantinople 1898-99, at Teheran 1899-1901, at Cairo 1901-2, at St. Petersburg as first secretary of the embassy 1903-6, at Teheran again, this time as minister, 1906-7, in England 1908, at Stockholm as minister 1908-12—wherever he happened to be, he maintained his connection with his American friends by a stream of letters. These letters and the friendships they preserve bulked so large in his life as to justify their part in the title which Mr. Gwynn has given to his volumes.

One other friendship has an ironical piquancy which renders it worthy of mention. Among the letters which Spring-Rice received congratulating him upon his appointment as Ambassador to Washington, was one from Vienna beginning: "Dear Springy, Hurrah three times for your appointment to Washington. Now I have made up my mind to go there too . . ." It was from Count Dumba, between whom and Spring-Rice a close friendship had been formed at Stockholm. Dumba did go to Washington, where the friendship was renewed, but was sent home in 1915 for having encouraged plots to cripple American munition factories which were turning out great quantities of war material to be used by his friend's country against his own.

The crucial test of Spring-Rice as diplomat came with the outbreak of the World War. His delicate task was to uphold Great Britain's interference with American commerce and at the same time to create and strengthen sympathy for the cause of the Allies. In the very nature of the case it was a task which was incapable of perfect performance. Spring-Rice met it partly by urging his own government to yield where vital interests were not at stake, partly by reminding the government to which he was accredited of the forbearance shown by English laborers who were thrown out of work by the cotton blockade in our Civil War. He advised against propaganda as not only useless but mischievous. Even after the United States entered the war, when it was proposed that the Pilgrims Society return the compliment of its London namesake and give a dinner in honor of the British Ambassador, Spring-Rice replied, "I still think silence is best." For this reserve he was criticized and his policy was reversed by the flamboyant Northcliffe during the short time the publisher was in this country as head of the British war mission, but Spring-Rice had on his side the impressive example of Ambassador Jusserand. Moreover, his common sense told him that if in similar circumstances the United States would have acted very much as his own government was acting, it was equally certain that Great Britain would have acted very much as the United States was acting.

The measure of his success and, accordingly, of the wisdom of his policy is found, not in the fact that the United States finally threw its sword into the scale against the Central Powers—his biographer discountenances any such preposterous allegation on his behalf—but in the more modest although far from unimportant fact that "he kept the way clear of unappeasable quarrels . . . so that when a sense of America's own interest urged America to enter, there was no envenomed feeling against Great Britain to check that impulse, nor any diplomatic complication to hold America back."

While there are no political revelations of significance in these volumes, there are pictures to which future historians may well turn for an understanding of the time. One of them is contained in the crisp sentence, appearing in a letter to Sir Edward Grey in September, 1916: "The nation is anti-German, anti-British, and somewhat pro-Ally." More strikingly significant is an analysis of the political psychology of the almost inaccessible man who was head of the American government during Spring-Rice's ambassadorship:

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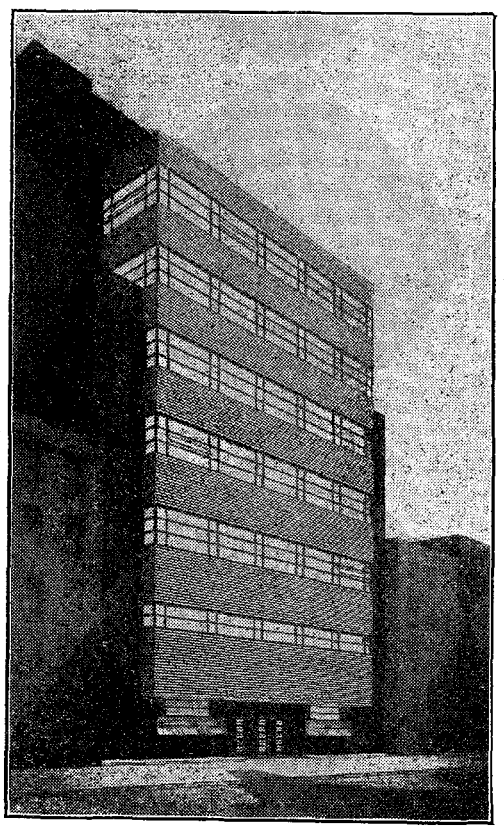

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> I have been in Russia, Berlin, Constantinople, and Persia, which are all popularly supposed to be autocratic governments. But I have never known any government so autocratic as this. This does not mean that the President acts without consulting the popular will. On the contrary his belief and practice is that he must not lead the people until he knows which way they want to go. But his interpretation of the oracle is his own secret, he consults it alone, he makes his own interpretation, and he acts according to his own judgment of what the people desire should be done. To curse him as many people do would be as wise as to curse the weather, or rather as to curse the weather-cock. But the mysterious way in which he moves makes everything a matter of divination rather than diplomacy. The F. O. [Foreign Office] used sometimes to say the same of Lord Salisbury. It is impossible even for his closest associates to foretell what he will do, for even his most intimate advisers do not know what other advisers had access to him and his left hand knoweth not what his right hand doeth.

Spring-Rice's recall at the beginning of 1918 was made in a cablegram which, although courteously worded and apologizing for its "telegraphic bluntness," unavoidably had the appearance of a censure. He had expected to be succeeded shortly by "some prominent and well-known British statesman" and his successor was no less a personage than Lord Reading. Nevertheless, the suddenness of the event was a shock. A few weeks later, while in Ottawa on his way home, he became unconscious and in a few minutes was dead—of what "in the old days," wrote Senator Lodge, "used to be termed a broken heart." He had not lived to see the outcome of America's entry into the war, but that entry itself, by aligning the English-speaking nations side by side, had realized a long-cherished dream.

ROYAL J. DAVIS

Sir Francis Bacon

Sir Francis Bacon: The First Modern Mind. By Byron Steel. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $3.

OF all the notable Elizabethans Francis Bacon stands most in need of a fresh and fearless evaluation. He is ripe for the treatment known as debunking, but Mr. Steel has not chosen to accept either the hints so obviously offered by Lytton Strachey or his own legitimate opportunity.

In a popular and somewhat undistinguished style—so simplified that he defines, explains, and discards as worthless the whole system of the Schoolmen in one short paragraph—Mr. Steel narrates the undisputed facts of Bacon's life. By an effective use of excerpts from Bacon's letters, and a clear portrayal of each step in the long and devious road he trod to his short-lived eminence, the author shows Bacon in all his moral and spiritual nakedness. His fawning upon Cecil and his tiresome boasting to the King of scholarly aims appear clearly as the essential falsehoods they are. The controversial places in Bacon's life, however, receive scant attention. If he is called "the first modern mind" his biographer must justify his claim to the title. Did he leave Cambridge principally because the curriculum was unbearable? What claims to distinction at the bar could he offer in disputing high judicial offices with Coke? If he is to take precedence over Roger Bacon, an avowed empiricist, and over his contemporaries, Galileo and Kepler, in what respect was he greater or more modern than they? Does his scientific reputation rest more on his literary skill than on his laboratory achievement? Did he create the concept of inductive reasoning or did he merely give expression to a prevalent, though as yet not clearly defined, idea?

With these questions and others like them the biographer of Bacon must deal. Partly by the antics of the Baconians and partly by the adulation of those who, without careful investigation, have put Bacon forward as a great lawyer and a pioneer natural scientist his fame has become the subject of much doubt. The shortcomings of his character have been sufficiently dealt with; Aubrey told the whole story when he said that Bacon had the eye of a serpent. Everyone acquainted with the subject knows that Bacon was the viper Mr. Steel a little reluctantly pictures. What was needed, and is still needed despite Mr. Steel's effort, is a dispassionate scholarly study of the discrepancy between Bacon's utterance and his character, and of the actual nature of his scientific and legal attainments.

DONALD A. ROBERTS

"—Lasst Uns zu Grunde Gehen!"

A Roman Holiday. By Don Ryan. The Macaulay Company. $2.50.

THE Western World is on the decline; so let us eat, drink, and be merry. The strong man is at one with his age, embraces its destiny—and likes it; nor strives to swim upstream against the remorseless current which bears along with it all cultures, swelling into civilizations, into the stagnant sea of fellahdom. The present age is "contemporary"—to use the word in its Spenglerian (I was about to say Pickwickian) sense—with the latter days of the Roman Empire, the final stage of classical civilization.

Quite appropriately, Mr. Ryan has dedicated his new novel to Oswald Spengler. Appropriately, too, he has chosen for his protagonist a woman with a man's mind, an uprooted woman who in girlhood has run away from a sordid home to become a hooch dancer in Tia Juana. But that is only the first step, for Diana is not only ambitious, she is a reader, an intellectual, who learns from the philosophers and poets as she goes along. She works her way to Hollywood, gets into the movies, and rises to stardom—only to have her career shattered by a scandal that rocks the motion-picture world. But with the help of the Negro comedian who has always loved her she eventually rises to even greater heights, for now she has read Spengler and her ambition flares up to make the talking picture the true art vehicle of this decadent age. All through her career Diana uses men when it serves her purpose and proves herself stronger than any of them.

Opposite her, through the first half of the book, plays Tom Egan, a young man of family, also intellectual, but a man without ambition, to whom life has lost meaning—a man whose blood has run thin. Comes the war. Egan goes through with it brilliantly, but it gives his character the final shove into dissolution. When he rejoins Diana he is jaded, seeking only the "kicks" he can get out of life—women, dope, perversions. Finally, after an orgiastic party given by Wally Mead, the film star, where liquor and narcotics and "strange sins" (as Oscar Wilde loved to say) are freely indulged in, where a cast-off classical professor describes in noble language the visions of a hashish dream, lapsing into Latin when he comes to the obscene portions, Egan commits suicide in the old Roman manner—to the strains of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

Mr. Ryan—with a bow toward Aldous Huxley—has written a Hollywood Satyricon, using a moving-picture tempo, with overtones of Spengler, Nietzsche, Freud, Ouspenski, and the new physics. Strangely enough, the learning, though thrown into the book in great chunks, does not seem to retard the pace of the story; for even if it is not—as has been claimed for it—a Spenglerian novel, "converting a philosophic theory into a living reality," yet it is certainly a glamorous Hollywood novel. And Mr. Ryan would probably say that Hollywood was the

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Western World in microcosm—with lighting effects; that he who has seen Hollywood has seen the world.

There is much in this audacious book that seems to this reviewer quite absurd; and there are some things about the extraordinary and fascinating heroine that seem to him incredible. But this is the most interesting novel ever to have come out of Hollywood. It could never have come from anywhere else. That is its curse as well as its significance.

FRED T. MARSH

The Case of Ambrose Bierce

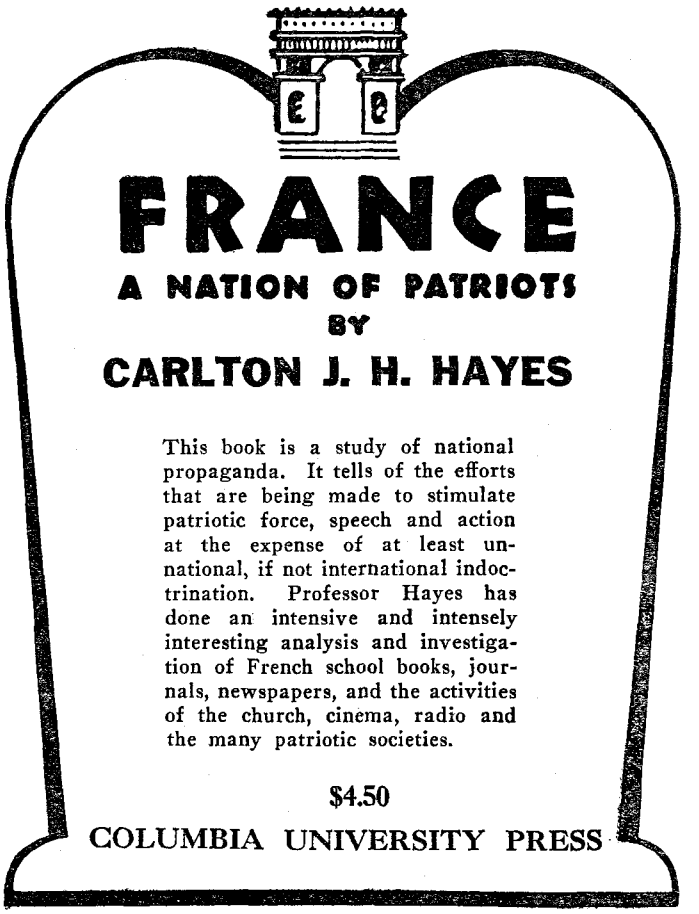
Ambrose Bierce: A Biography. By Carey McWilliams. A and C. Boni. $3.50.

MR. McWILLIAMS'S book, the fourth study of Bierce published within a year, is so much the best of the four that it might be allowed to stand as the definitive account of Bierce's life. That it is not completely accurate is indicated by Professor Wilt's article in "American Literature," which throws doubt on a source McWilliams regards as impeccable—Bierce's war reminiscences. There are still, it appears, mysteries within mysteries. But McWilliams has diligently verified dates, examined unpublished letters, consulted newspaper files, and interviewed those who knew Bierce. The result is as close an approach to authenticity as we are likely to have, and perhaps as close as there is any legitimate reason for demanding. In its important details the case of Ambrose Bierce is perfectly clear.

It is clear, for one thing, that Mr. McWilliams was not far wrong when he stated in *The Nation* last June: "His [Bierce's] contribution to American literature could be summarized in a footnote of no considerable length." His satire, which to the reader of today displays no penetrating or philosophic quality of survival value, was even in its own time, as McWilliams is careful to point out, essentially futile. His short stories grew out of a theory of fiction that squeezed vitality and verisimilitude from his material the moment he began to write. Even Professor Pattee should have been able to estimate Bierce's place in literature without recourse to the opinions of Walter Neale.

Less obvious but not altogether obscure are the reasons for Bierce's vogue. Because he had an air of self-confidence, because he was courageous, because he possessed more integrity than was common in that day, he impressed his younger contemporaries. Myths grew up about the man from the first; he was a legend forty years before his mysterious disappearance provided the opportunity for apotheosis. Moreover, there had developed by the time of his death a school of writers who, having brushed aside the accepted authors of Bierce's generation, flattered themselves by hailing him as a prototype of their enlightenment.

There is also, of course, the fact that Bierce has attracted the attention of critics interested in explaining the repeated frustration of literary talent in America. Bierce's defeat seems to have been the result of his romantic, sentimental, almost adolescent cynicism. Mr. McWilliams, by tracing this cynicism as far back as Bierce's earliest experiments in journalism, lends plausibility to Lewis Mumford's theory that the Civil War was its cause. The real question, however, is why Bierce never outgrew this attitude. To me his environment is sufficient explanation. What could a man like Bierce do in the midst of the chaotic life of the Coast in the post-bellum period? He could alternate between the literature of protest—bitter, heartfelt, and useless—and the literature of escape—skilfully written, momentarily effective, and completely unreal. It is not a question of what a great genius could have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done; there is no evidence that Bierce was even potentially a great genius; he was a man with a literary gift that might have developed and with a mind that might have grown.

If the Bierce myth had never existed, one would find it difficult to justify the conscientious labor that has gone into this book. As it is, it is well for us to be able to separate fact from fable, and for that reason Mr. McWilliams's subject is not unworthy of the care, intelligence, ingenuity, and insight he has devoted to it. His work is conspicuously and satisfyingly unlike the slap-dash biographies that clutter up the bookstands. Though his style is uneven and his pages are not wholly free from solecisms, the diligence of his research and the sanity of his critical judgments make the book an admirable performance.

GRANVILLE HICKS

Books in Brief

Shadows of Men. By Jim Tully. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

Jim Tully has come a long way in craftsmanship since his earliest books, but in other respects he remains unchanged. And in this collection of reminiscent tales, loosely tied together, about jailbirds, dope fiends, outcasts of all sorts, from Dippy the pyromaniac to the tragic boy, Bright Eyes, he writes of a world with which his readers are already familiar. If one has suspected—or hoped—that Jim Tully might some day become an American Gorki, "Shadows of Men" will not satisfy him. Mr. Tully has not yet succeeded in conveying to his readers that transcendent sense of universality which is the secret of power in the great literature of the despised and rejected. But if one asks only for vivid yet realistic stories of the lower depths in American life, here is another book to add to Mr. Tully's growing list. It is a moving book; the characters live because their creator knows them, not only by experience, but with an understanding heart.

Mothers Cry. By Helen Grace Carlisle. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

The reader who begins this book is likely to finish it. A mother, poor but refined, simple in thought but "rich with life," tells her seemingly artless story with tremendous cumulative effect. It opens with her courtship and ends on the day after her oldest child (and the author herself gives this away at the beginning of the book) dies, a murderer, in the electric chair. The years of struggle to keep herself and her little brood going, the growth and development of the four children, how one boy becomes "a builder to make beauty greater" while the other is born "a destroyer to kill"—all are touchingly described. Possibly this novel will be revived some day as a typical example of the pathetic literature of our period, just as we occasionally turn back to faded and forgotten romances over which our grandfathers and, more particularly, grandmothers wept. For this book, conceived and projected in the approved contemporary manner, is essentially as meretricious as those incredibly popular thrillers. On the surface it appears simple, sincere, utterly realistic; but in truth it is planned and constructed with reasoning care toward a single purpose—not to mirror life but to wring the heart. No single stop is left unpulled; no chance to twang a heart-string is overlooked. Mr. Dreiser, however, recommends it warmly, the master being, it would seem, the most generous of critics.

Iron Man. By W. R. Burnett. The Dial Press. $2.50.

Mr. Burnett's first novel, "Little Caesar," was about a Chicago gangster, and was—to adopt the language of the sporting fraternity, in which dialect "Iron Man" is written—a

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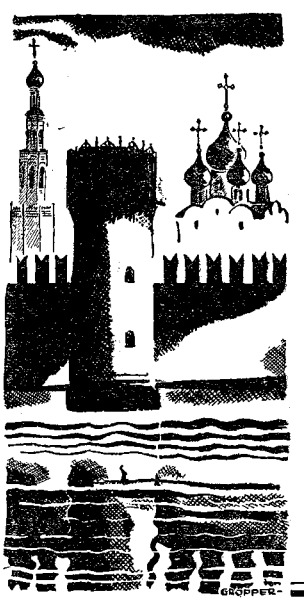

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"natural." This second novel, therefore, suffers by comparison, though it deals with an equally glamorous phase of the American scene—the "fight game." The action here is not so rapid, nor are the dramatic moments so tense; and "Coke" Mason, the "dumb" middle-weight who becomes world's champion in his class only to go down in defeat because of a woman—who, by the way, happens to be his wife—cannot begin to compare as a hero with Rico, the gangster in "Little Caesar." But "Iron Man" should make a hit. The situations are plausible and skilfully handled, there are several thrilling reportorial accounts of ring battles, and the talk—of which there is a great deal—is authentic. Mr. Burnett knows his fighters; he has also studied his Hemingway—possibly too assiduously. Those who like the usual run of prize-fight stories will here find a book that tops the list. But the real prize-fight novel has yet to be written. As a work of art "Iron Man" is simply not in the running.

Twelve Against the Gods. By William Bolitho. Simon and Schuster. $4.

An adventurer, according to Mr. Bolitho, is an outlaw, charlatan, or idealist, who dares to resist not only the course of the social and moral order but the experience of mankind, and attempts the impossible in life. One may dispute the definition and question the omission of certain figures or the suitability of others, but no one will wholly regret the author's choices. Alexander, Casanova, Napoleon I, Isadora, these are the recrudescent idols of every romanticist whatever his hypothesis. The combination is often not so happy as this one. Mr. Bolitho's estimates, which are just without being cynical, his enthusiasm, and his vibrant prose are really worthy of his subjects. His book should make a holiday for all who worship at the same shrines.

Look Homeward, Angel. By Thomas Wolfe. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

Between the apostrophes, soliloquies, and philippics, through the torment, the despair, and the rapture of this prodigious first novel run the story of a mad clan of Georgians and the social history of that lost class which manages to escape the lot of Negroes and poor whites without becoming the eminent minority. Here is a fragment of the American scene unfamiliar to our social novels; here is "naked life" described with scope and fervor. As in the best tradition of naturalism, nothing has been omitted—nothing except that unobtrusive artifice which bestows upon a great novel the aesthetic quality, the impression of something other than life. There is novelty in the book's intensive compound of romantic fancy and irony, and there is great vitality in the episodes, but the vigor never becomes strength because it is dissipated by incoherence and the lack of a steady emphasis. Like life it is incomplete and unfinished—it might go on forever. The author gives no structural reason for it to stop.

Joaquin Miller and His Other Self. By Harr Wagner. San Francisco: Harr Wagner Publishing Company. $5.

Mr. Wagner makes good his claim that he has new information to offer concerning the once-great poet of California; letters, journals, and other bits of biographical evidence serve to fill out our picture of this man who went as a pioneer youth from Indiana to California, sowed his wild oats on the plains and among the mountains, settled down to pedagogy and poetry, enjoyed a period of rather flashy fame in England, and spent the long remainder of his Western life as a flowing-bearded bard and a "natural" lover. The personality so sketched is indeed interesting. But Mr. Wagner fails to convince us that his hero was even a third-rate poet. If one was uncertain about this before, the quotations would settle the matter.

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Films

A Soviet Fantasy

POLITICAL sympathies enter to such a large extent into the public appreciation of Russian films that it is something of a problem to consider "A Fragment of an Empire" (Cameo) on its merits as a picture. Here is unquestionably an unusual piece of work if measured by the standards of Hollywood. It deals with the interesting if not quite original theme of a man who suddenly finds himself in a new world, unaware of the changes which took place while he was suffering from the effects of amnesia. It also employs some very striking images to describe the man's experiences and reactions. Moreover—which is rare—the acting in it is reserved and sensitive. With all this excellent material "A Fragment of an Empire" might have been a great picture. It actually falls short of this by a very considerable margin.

Perhaps the most disappointing thing about it is its treatment of the new ways of life in Soviet Russia as they reveal themselves to the primitive mind of a peasant worker who remembers only the Russia of the Czars. The war scenes which make up the first half of the picture, though not quite relevant to the theme and somewhat overburdened with symbolism, are magnificently conceived. One expects an equal wealth of imagery and an equal sense of dramatic contrast in the scenes which describe the impact of the new life on a mind that has been bound by tradition and ruled by the idea of the sacred rights of master over his men, of husband over his wife, of father over his children. Here was an opportunity to show the remarkable changes wrought by the revolution in the status and mentality of the worker.

But just at this point inspiration seems to have deserted the authors of the picture. Their hero, on recovering memory and returning to Petrograd, is thrown into a state of utter bewilderment by such trivial changes as a monument to Lenin—of whom he had probably never heard—a block of new buildings, the short skirts worn by women, and the fact that the old owner of the factory in which he used to work no longer owns it. On the other hand, the picture makes hardly any attempt to show the reactions of the man to his new social standing and new opportunities for enjoying life. In fact, in one respect, namely, the relationship between husband and wife, it seems to suggest that there has been no change at all, our hero recovering his wife from a man whom she has been obeying with as much docility as she had probably obeyed himself.

Of the two other silent pictures recently shown suffice it to say that "The Demon of the Steppes" (Film Guild) is a rather mediocre Russian picture, and "The Last Night" (Fifty-fifth Street Cinema) a somewhat better German one.

Richard Barthelmess, who distinguished himself in the part of a Chinaman in Griffith's "Broken Blossoms," plays another Chinaman in "Son of the Gods" (Warner Brothers Theater), an effort to show the injustice of race discrimination, culminating in a complete surrender to existing prejudices. The oriental color of the picture is about as authentic as Hollywood can make it, and the same must be said of the credibility of the story. The only feature of the picture deserving praise is the very able acting of Miss Constance Bennett.

The appearance of a singer of the Metropolitan Opera in a full-length motion picture may be a portent of the times indicating the trend toward a screen opera, but Mr. Lawrence Tibbett's vocalizing in "The Rogue Song" (Astor) fails to make this musical travesty a notable achievement in any other respect. Except for a few ballet scenes, it is quite crude.

ALEXANDER BAKSHY

Drama

Gopher Prairie, Spain

EVA LE GALLIENNE has added still another play by the Spanish brothers Quintero to her list at the Civic Repertory Theater. This time it is the light but graceful and consistently amusing comedy, "The Women Have Their Way." A young lawyer from Madrid comes to a small town in Andalusia to settle the estate of an uncle. No sooner does he arrive than the women of the town begin to invent a romance for him with one Juanita La Rosa, a girl of whom he has caught a casual glimpse, and of whom he has remarked, unfortunately within the hearing of two or three others, that she is rather pretty. Against his will an introduction is arranged; they are continually thrown together at every social gathering; their every look and comment is interpreted as if it held a deep significance; various subterfuges on the part of others bring the affair to a crisis, and the young lawyer, of course, finally capitulates, actually does fall in love, and proposes. The authors are relentless in their exposure of the almost incredibly narrow range of interests and topics in a little humdrum village which makes such busybodies possible, but there is never the slightest bitterness or malice in their humor; it is all as gentle and kindly as the warm Spanish sunlight. The outstanding performance in the play is that of Egon Brecher as the easy-going priest Don Julian.

This short two-act play is preceded by a curtain-raiser, "The Open Door," by Alfred Sutro, a deft and moving piece in which nothing more unusual happens than that two people who can do nothing more about it confess that they love each other. Miss Le Gallienne acts with her usual capability both in this and in the Quintero comedy.

"Josef Süss" (Erlanger's Theater), the play by Ashley Dukes, has been harshly judged on the ground that it does not adequately reflect the richness and sweep of the novel by Lion Feuchtwanger on which it is based; but in the drastic reduction which dramatization necessitates this result was inevitable. "Josef Süss" as a play does, it is true, suffer from a certain episodic quality, but it is none the less powerful and impressive. The play opens at the moment when Süss ingratiates himself with Karl Alexander just before the latter becomes Duke of Württemberg; it carries the Jew through his unscrupulous rise to power until his own daughter kills herself to escape from the libertine Duke, and then to the moment when he has achieved his revenge and is led off to prison. Maurice Moscovitch plays the title role with a fine restraint, and Malcolm Keen gives a convincing performance as the Duke.

"Strike Up the Band" (Times Square Theater) is a musical show that is not only boldly original in plot but even flirts with social satire. It concerns a war between the United States and Switzerland over an increased duty on Swiss chocolate. For an act and a half the authors (the book is by Morrie Ryskind, "based on a libretto by George S. Kaufman," and the lyrics are by Ira Gershwin) have a gay time with the self-made American business man and his philosophy and with imperialism and war psychology; then everything evaporates into a typical song-and-dance show with the usual sentimental ending. The lines and lyrics are considerably above the average; George Gershwin's music, though it does not easily cling to the memory, is very pleasant while it is going on, and Bobby Clark, with his miraculous cigar, cane, and eyebrows, is responsible for a more than generous supply of humor.

H. H.

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**City Haul—Hudson—44th St., E. of B'dway.
*Civic Repertory—14th St. & 6th Ave.—See Advertisement.
*Criminal Code—National—W. 41st St.
*Death Takes a Holiday—Barrymore Theatre—47th St., W. of B'dway.
*Dishonored Lady—Empire—40th St. & B'dway.
Ruth Draper—Comedy—41st St., E. of B'dway.
**Everything's Jake—Assembly—39th St., E. of B'dway.
*Josef Suss—Erlangers—44th St., W. of B'dway.
*Journey's End—Miller—124 W. 43rd St.
**June Moon—Broadhurst—W. 44th St.
**Meteor—Guild—W. 52nd St.
**Out of a Blue Sky—Booth—44th St., W. of B'dway.
**Rebound—Plymouth—45th St., W. of B'dway.
*Red Rust—Beck—302 W. 45th St.
**Strictly Dishonorable—Avon—W. 45th St.
***Strike Up The Band—Times Sq.—W. of B'dway.
***Sweet Adeline—Hammerstein—Broadway & 53rd St.
*The Boundary Line—Forty-eighth—48th St., E. of B'dway.
*The First Mile—Comedy—41st St. E. of B'dway.
***Wake Up and Dream—Selwyn—42nd St., W. of B'dway.

Films

Across the World—Cohan—43rd St. & B'dway.
Caught In The Berlin Underworld—Cameo—42d St., E. B'dway.
Disraeli—Central Theatre—Broadway and 47th St.
The Green Goddess—Winter Garden—1646 B'dway.

Concerts and Recitals

Harold Bauer—Town Hall—Sat. Aft., Feb. 15.
Mischa Elman—Carnegie—Sun. Eve., Feb. 16.
Heifetz—Carnegie—Wed. Eve., Feb. 19.
Martinelli—Carnegie—Tues. Eve., Feb. 18.
Philharmonic Symphony—Carnegie—Thurs. Eve., Feb. 13; Fri. Aft., Feb. 14.
Students Concerts—Philharmonic—Carnegie—Sat. Eve., Feb. 15.
Tales of Hoffman—Grand Opera for Children—Town Hall—Sat. Morn., Feb. 22.

*Drama. **Comedy. ***Musical.

Announcement

How Far Should Government Regulate Business—Mr. Henry Goddard Leach, Mr. Oswald Garrison Villard, and Mr. Frederick A. Korsmeyer, speakers, over WEAF, Feb. 18, 7 to 7:30 P. M., Eastern Standard Time, under the auspices of the National League of Women Voters.

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Mr. Preston Sturges, whose delightful comedy "Strictly Dishonorable" is still playing to crowded houses in a bad season, now offers another entertainment called "Recapture" (Eltinge). It is all about a lady—played as well as possible and very decoratively by Ann Andrews—who has loved rapturously once and who is distressed because having lost "the rainbow"—Mr. Sturges's language—she cannot find it again. Figuring prominently in the action also is the lift in a French hotel, which usually will not work but which works too well at the end and carries the lady to an untimely death. The whole thing seems very gaudy and unreal. If Mr. Sturges wrote it a long time ago he can be forgiven; if he wrote it after "Strictly Dishonorable" one wonders what has become of his talent for high comedy. D. V. D.

Oscar Straus's "The Chocolate Soldier" (Jolson Theater), based on George Bernard Shaw's "Arms and the Man," is one of the pleasantest revivals in some years. The music is as delightful and the book of course is as clever as ever. The performance generally equals the productions of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas staged by Winthrop Ames a few seasons ago. Alice Mackenzie, Charles Purcell, and Vivian Hart are to be commended particularly. M. G.

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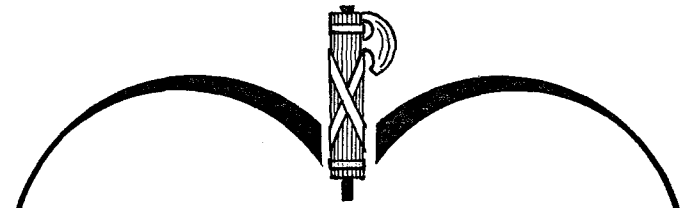

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Security and "Sanctions"

THE following article, which we reprint from the London *Economist,* analyzes and explains in illuminating fashion the opposing attitudes of Washington and Paris toward the whole question of armaments and peace pacts.

The declaration in the new German-American reparation agreement that "the United States Government agrees to regard Germany's loyalty and faith and credit as sole security and guaranty for the fufilment of Germany's obligations under this agreement" introduces an unaccustomed note into a formal diplomatic document, and it is not surprising that pointed contrasts have been drawn in Germany itself between the attitude of the American government and that of certain other countries a good deal nearer to Berlin, whose habit it is to raise the "sanction" issue wherever possible.

That contrast does in fact exist, and it springs from a divergence of outlook which finds expression in more fields than one. So far as reparations go, it may be observed without suspicion of cynicism that the United States can well afford to be tender to German susceptibilities, for Germany's obligations are now being so largely commercialized that the whole national credit is involved in any case, and the last nation with which the German government would willingly embroil itself financially is the state to which financial dominance has largely passed. By introducing into the agreement a passage expressly renouncing all idea of any but moral sanctions, America creates a general atmosphere of good-will and establishes herself in particularly good odor in Berlin. Even from the purely business point of view there is sound sense in such a course, just as from the business point of view there was sound sense in America's renunciation of a considerable portion of her share of the Boxer indemnity in 1908. . . . In such matters American idealism is entirely genuine, but it is perhaps commended rather more than it otherwise would be to the average American mind by the fact that it has its uses as an asset in international relations as well.

Akin to the opposition of view between the United States and, for example, France over sanctions in regard to Germany is the same opposition of view between the same two countries over such larger questions as the naval conference and the relationship of the League Covenant and the Kellogg pact. In all these fields Washington and Paris represent merely the poles of opposition. The questions on which they thus take position concern equally the other Powers of the world, particularly those participating in the naval conference, . . . Broadly speaking, the contrast is between tight and loose understandings, . . . France standing, as she always does stand, for the system formally complete and worked out remorselessly in every logical detail. The Treaty of Versailles, with its specific provision against every possible contingency and its sanctions in reserve against every possible default, is characteristically French. So—paradoxically enough in view of its partially American origin—is the League Covenant as contrasted with the Kellogg pact, which, to carry the paradox further, is characteristically American in tenor despite its debt to the initiative of a French foreign minister.

Fundamentally, the contrast is due to the difference of conditions on the two sides of the Atlantic. For France, and in lesser, or in some cases even in greater, degree for other European states, security is a real and vital issue. For the United States it is not and never has been. The inevitable intermediary and interpreter between France on the one hand and the United States on the other is Great Britain, a fact which imposes considerable responsibilities on a government which has just sent its Foreign Minister to Geneva to carry a stage farther the task of bringing the League Covenant into harmony with the Kellogg pact, and will in ten days' time have four of its Cabinet Ministers sitting side by side with the French and American delegates hammering out the details of a naval limitation agreement. Those two tasks are far more intimately associated than at first sight appears.

Naval limitation raises immediately the security issue on which France lays such increasing stress. In American eyes France's views on security are no less than an obsession. Because of France's insistence on guns and aeroplanes and submarines as bulwarks of security, instead of on covenants of good faith between nations, the whole limitation of armaments is imperiled. So reasons Washington. Because America, Paris replies, will give no assurance that she will take her part in enforcing covenants if they are wantonly broken, France at least must take measures in other directions for her safety. She is a loyal member of the League of Nations, lacking though the League is in that material force with which the French delegation at the peace conference strove so hard to equip her. But even the Covenant of the League is insufficient for France, in view of the room it leaves for uncertainty as to whether war in violation of obligations will, in fact, be repressed by collective action. Hence the enthusiasm for measures like the Geneva Protocol, designed to tighten the Covenant up in this respect.

In contrast to the Covenant, with its palpable insufficiencies, from France's point of view, America sets the Kellogg pact. There is, fortunately, no sort of opposition between the two documents. If the pact goes farther in the direction of formal prohibition, or rather renunciation, of war, the Covenant goes farther in the measures it embodies for the protection of the law-abiding nation against the lawless. In the former respect the Covenant is in process of being brought up to the level of the pact. In the latter there is no visible prospect of the pact being invested with the provisions for enforcement included in the Covenant. That matters little to signatories of the pact who are also signatories of the Covenant, except in so far as it fails to give them an assurance that America will be in action at the side of the unoffending law-observer when attacked by a law-breaking aggressor. So far from that, there is not even the assurance that America will not interfere, in the interests of her own traders, with the measures the law-observers may find it necessary to take in concert against the law-breaker. It is under these conditions that France declares openly that till the American attitude—and, to a much lesser degree, the attitude of various prominent members of the League of Nations, including Great Britain—changes, her eastern fortifications and her air squadrons and her super-submarines must be her safeguard. . . .

The process of increasing Europe's faith in the sanctity of covenants unaccompanied by any obtrusive menace of enforcement is developing. So is the process of the education of the United States in the lesson that world citizenship means world responsibilities. No one soberly reviewing the course of events in the past ten years can be blind for a moment to the progress achieved in both directions. The present attitude of the United States and France may present strong contrasts. But, at any rate, the roads the two states are taking are tending to converge steadily, not to diverge farther.

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